

Appendix: NGA Broadband (Fibre)
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1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this paper is:

- 1.1.1 To provide an update on the progress to delivery of the Local Growth Funded Colchester NGA Broadband Project.
- 1.1.2 To seek approval from the board for the revised project proposals.
- 1.1.3 To outline the revised timetable for project delivery.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked:

- 2.1.1 To approve the revised proposals including proposed costings, CBC SELEP award and match-funding allocations including s106 investment and the delivery milestones and programme for the rescoped Project to deliver Next Generation Access by the installation of a passive fibre optic infrastructure to an initial four key business clusters including the Town Centre to support enterprise competitiveness, inward investment and growth.
- 2.1.2 To note that the release of £141,764 of s106 funds for economic development purposes by CBC will be allocated to provide the match-funding indicated as spend on the Project.
- 2.1.3 To note the financial assumptions as set out in the report below.

3. Background

- 3.1 CBC was allocated £200,000 from the Local Growth Fund (managed by the Government Department, BIS and subject to due diligence process) to deliver a project addressing “market failures” in the delivery of superfast broadband (24 Mbps and above) at a competitive price to business park occupiers. CBC aimed to commence the Project in Q2, 2015. However, considerable delays in receiving the funds meant that roll-out of superfast connectivity had already taken place in many of the identified areas of market need and this has had an adverse impact on the viability of the project for both the Council and its partner County Broadband. By mutual agreement, County Broadband withdrew from the original project.
- 3.2 Colchester Borough Council remains strongly committed to delivering high quality high speed connectivity to businesses in the Borough and has therefore reviewed the project and re-scoped it accordingly to focus on the following criteria: (a) areas of continuing/unmet connectivity need, (b) technological viability, (c) future-proofing of technology and the customer base, and (d) commercial returns.

- 3.3 The revised approach adopted by Colchester Borough is to co-invest (through the use of s106 monies) to support the delivery of “business class” (resilient, 24/7 access) symmetrical up-to gigabit connectivity delivered by fibre to four business clusters to correct for the above market failures, supporting business and job growth and creating a more competitive marketplace for broadband services. The Project will be aimed at SMEs, and will deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) fibre optic connectivity (up to symmetrical 1Gbps) to four key business clusters within Colchester accommodating more than 865 registered businesses with more than 20,000 employees in total (ONS IDBR, 2013). The service will be symmetrical – offering equivalent upload and download speeds – and will also provide “bundled” VoIP services which will allow businesses to retain existing numbers while moving to a lower cost service. The project will put in place the connectivity required for future mobile telephony networks (5G, 2018-20), reinforce the existing town-centre CCTV network, thereby improving public safety, and make Colchester a leading town in the provision of affordable, ultra-fast connectivity to business.
- 3.4 The revised project addresses business needs for reliable, ultra-high speed and symmetric broadband connectivity which is not available from BT’s FTTC programme (branded as “Superfast Essex” in Greater Essex) and which will be more competitive than the ultra-high-speed (leased line, private circuit) offering from BT and Virgin Media. This will reduce business overhead costs for uncontended very high bandwidth services required by current and emerging enterprise needs and for telephony services. The Project will deliver a world-class broadband offering - resilient broadband speeds, enhanced coverage, and introduce future-proofed connectivity technologies. Importantly the project will now deliver ultra-high speed broadband access to the Creative Business Centre in St Botolph’s, a jointly funded initiative between CBC and ECC which seeks to incubate and grow creative and digital businesses – a key sector of growth for both authorities in their Growth Strategies. The proposal will be used to keep pressure on existing operators to invest to bring world class solutions to Colchester, rather than selectively investing to protect legacy products like private circuits.
- 3.5 The Project addresses acknowledged “market failures” in the provision of fibre-to-the-business/premises connectivity in city centres (BT, Director of Wales, evidence to the Public Accounts Committee, Welsh Assembly, November 2015) , has a strong fit with key Council development priorities, is based on a hybrid connectivity approach delivering hitherto inaccessible symmetrical gigabit connectivity and has a tight footprint focused on key business/commerce clusters, initially in the town centre.
- 3.6 The initial roll-out of the Project will be focused on the Creative Business Centre, a new venue for the creative and digital industries in Colchester (due to open in September 2016), the town centre and the Middleborough cluster of business and administrative offices. The ultrafast connectivity provided to the Creative Business Centre will be the key driver of the Project. The advent of the Centre with its estimated (first-year) client base of 125 businesses will provide an immediate opportunity to replicate fibre projects unrolled elsewhere (most notably at the Perseverance Works in Shoreditch, London), in a cost-effective way with a minimum of disturbance costs. The Council-owned CCTV ducting will be used as the primary asset to deliver a fibre to the premises (FTTP) solution. BT Openreach has refused to provide FTTP connectivity to the Creative Business Centre, but without stating its reasons. Organic growth plus further work centred in 2016-17 on the Colchester Northern Gateway will extend the reach of this FTTP solution to other emerging, major business clusters. It is expected that CBC’s operating partners, to be selected

by competitive Tender in February 2016, will finance or co-finance this expansion as part of their business plan.

- 3.7 The target installation is for the core fibre ring linking the St Botolph's Quarter, the town centre, Middleborough and Rowan House to be in place and operational by the end of March 2016. The backhaul to the Internet Service Provider, and all rack/router equipment, will be located in the server room already designated in the Creative Business Centre, which will ensure the Council's chosen operator has 24/7 secure access. Connectivity will be actively marketed to ensure rapid initial take-up of paying customers during the roll-out phase, as well as year 1-2 operations. Comparable schemes in London and Coventry have delivered 100+ subscribing businesses within the first 12-18 months, and resilient income streams in excess of £80k per year, which are split between the operator and the owner of the passive infrastructure (i.e. the Council) on a revenue-sharing basis. In the longer-term, the network will provide multiple future commercial development opportunities, including expansion and upgrading of the existing town centre WiFi network to enable its monetisation, the roll-out of 5G in 2018-20, and a fundamental upgrading of the Council's CCTV network. The fibre infrastructure will position Colchester as a front-runner in the evolution to "Smart City" innovative solutions for the provision of other public services, including waste and recycling.
- 3.8 It is proposed that all new planning permissions for further phases, such as Northern Gateway, include the need to provision communication duct ready for multiple operators to then be owned and maintained by the Council in the way footpaths are maintained by Essex County Council, however the Northern Gateway forms part of a phase 2 of the project and will require a new funding opportunity although the ability to move on to a further phase of work will form part of the RFI process to be carried out with potential network operators. No planning permissions are required for Phase 1 of the project utilising the existing ductwork.

Project Rationale

- 3.9 The Project addresses what is a "live" issue very much on the wider agenda of Government and policymakers. The Ofcom Infrastructure Report 2014 (Section 4) considers the issue of SME connectivity although it is noted that there is current work to assess the current levels of availability, choice and quality of communications services for SMEs. This Project considers from other public sources (including Public Accounts Committee reports on Superfast Broadband, submissions to that Committee by INCA, and more recently submissions to the current Culture, Media and Sport Inquiry into World-class connectivity by the Federation of Small Business. The Federation and many more point to the need for competition and innovation.
- 3.10 Re quality of service from current provision: 'Recent research conducted by Jigsaw for Ofcom...found that satisfaction with internet services [by SMEs] was lower than for landline and mobile voice services. Speed and reliability were the most frequently given reasons for dissatisfaction. In particular, satisfaction with DSL broadband – which is used by two-thirds of SMEs – was significantly lower than with other services. SMEs said that their growth had been hampered by lack of suitable communications services (15%) reported higher than average dissatisfaction with ADSL. A minority of SMEs (11%) believed their business would benefit from communication services not currently available. Faster/fibre broadband was the service most likely to be mentioned'. A Centre for Cities report (January 2016) reported that Colchester ranks 57th for broadband speeds among 63 towns and cities

benchmarked, underscoring the economic prerogative for transformative change in this sector in the Borough.

- 3.11 In terms of latent demand around quality and pricing competitiveness from the current proposed Project, the Ofcom Report confirms that: 'Some SMEs, such as those that offer Internet-based services, are likely to have higher resilience and/or bandwidth requirements. They would therefore be likely to require a service tailored to business needs, which provides better performance and has higher service levels than services which are typically taken by residential consumers. The majority of SMEs buy business broadband services rather than using residential products (77% for landlines, 74% for internet services and 50% of mobile phone services)'.
- 3.12 Further evidence of latent and explicit demand for the Project can be found in The Federation of Small Business report of July 2014 looking into broadband provision and access for business in the UK. This report noted that:
 - 3.12.1 14% of small businesses consider lack of reliable and fast broadband connectivity to be their main barrier to growth; and
 - 3.12.2 Only 15% of small firms say they are very satisfied with their broadband provision, while 25% say they are fairly or very dissatisfied. This is particularly pertinent to Colchester, given the very high proportion (90%+) of the working population employed in SMEs.
- 3.13 Early results from the Essex Business Survey 2014 highlight the importance of being 'In a good broadband/fibre optic area' to business location decisions: 83.4% of businesses reported this as an important requirement, rivalling good mobile phone coverage, transport links and parking as the highest scoring replies.
- 3.14 The Project is needed now because the Borough is at an important moment in its housing-driven growth which is generating an increasing mis-match between the growth of the working-age population and the number and quality of available jobs. Colchester's role as a key creative/digital industry hub is recognised by SELEP, the Economic Plan for Essex, and the Council's own Economic Growth Strategy. A major driver of this growing sector which has considerable digitalisation potential for other industry sectors is access to significant broadband capacity. Development of ultra-fast connectivity is a cornerstone of the Borough's economic development strategy over the next five years, and will support existing employers in the digital, creative and software sectors, as well as encourage relocation of companies requiring business-class connectivity at affordable prices. The Project provides a solution that currently remains unavailable to many of these companies, most of them SMEs, due to cost considerations.
- 3.15 The Project offers a viable 'open access' model boosted greatly by CBC ownership of the Town Centre ducting, meaning a fibre to the premises (FTTP) solution can quickly be offered to SMEs, Council-owned facilities and other key locations, including the Colchester Institute and Sixth-Form College. This connectivity is likely to be offered at a competitive rate, but costs will be modelled using a full replacement cost to avoid any possible challenges. The State Aid and legal aspects of the project have received thorough examination (including by external, sector-specific Counsel), and we believe there is minimal likelihood of challenge from BT or Virgin Media, given that they will be offered access to the Council-owned passive infrastructure on an equivalent basis to all other potential operators.

Market Demand, Stakeholder Engagement and Scheme Viability

- 3.16 Discussions have been held with a wide range of consultants, businesses, relevant political partners and others to confirm the latent demand for the Project. Targeted pre-marketing has indicated that initial take-up by businesses within the geographical reach of Phase One roll-out will be solid. Mapping of Virgin Media Business services reveals that, while their network is growing, it is still reliant on delivering symmetrical ultra-high-speed connectivity to town centre businesses using leased lines. Moreover, VMB's pricing structures are likely to continue mirroring those set by the dominance of BT Open reach in the business connectivity market.
- 3.17 Consultations over the previous iteration of the NGA broadband project, especially with key business organisations including the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and the Institute of Directors, indicated full support for a project aimed at delivering better connectivity. Feedback from their members indicates continuing frustration with the current provision in terms of cost and upload/download speeds. A presentation in February 2015 by the Council to major businesses on new investment in the Borough cited the SELEP funding of business broadband as being a positive and welcome intervention.
- 3.18 In terms of Next Generation Access Broadband coverage and services for business clusters in Colchester, the website SamKnows was used to assess the overall position in terms of service provision through exchange mapping of the relevant postcodes. Together with sampled business opinion in key business clusters, it became evident from BT's commercial roll-out of NGA broadband that cabinets was not being enabled for the Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) solutions in business parks, not only in Colchester Borough but across the UK. This was also recognised by INCA, the network of independent communications providers. However, the roll-out was significantly expedited during 2014 and the first half of 2015 following sustained political pressure from both local and central government. This has required the reworking of our initial business case to refocus it on future-proofed fibre-to-the-business/premises technology, which remains prohibitively expensive for the majority of SMEs and is not made available by the current BT FTTC programme.
- 3.19 The cable operator, Virgin Media, markets its 'business class' solution to SMEs but take-up remains low as it is expensive (a symmetrical 1Gbps leased line costs in the region of £650-850 per month, sometimes in addition to significant installation charges.). Secondly, we are informed that VM have no plans to extend their current coverage "footprint", for example to new business park/cluster locations or to underserved or unserved current locations nor to new residential areas since their market share would then be liable to lead the Competition Commission and/or Ofcom, the Regulator, to consider splitting the business into two: infrastructure and retail. This re scoped project will have further phases of expansion into areas of underserved connectivity need, subject to future funding.
- 3.20 **Relationship to the BDUK "superfast" programme:** The BDUK Programme - which has BT as its only supplier and Fibre to the Cabinet as its only technology - is covered by its own State Aid arrangements. As the CBC Project is not part of this Programme and, indeed, is designed to overcome its deficiencies –, the Project must be measured by its own fit with general State Aid requirements. The Project is consonant with the need to deliver sufficient, ultrafast superfast, broadband services to meet demand, and it has been developed with full cognisance of the potential State Aid issues identified by external legal Counsel during the work-up of the initial fixed

wireless broadband-based project and its remodelling to the current fibre-based project.

- 3.21 **Future broadband trends and their impact on the Project:** In the next five years it is unlikely that the major operators will significantly alter the persistently high costs of leased lines which deliver “business class” broadband. However, it is the case that better broadband will become available for businesses everywhere over time in terms of some upgrading of base speed and price but the distinction between increasingly faster and dedicated business solutions bundling increased access to other Information and Communication Technologies (such as VoIP, Cloud computing, etc.) will be used to maintain the valuable leased line market for BT and Virgin Media and other operators. In this respect, the gap between the residential offer and the “business class” offer appears likely to remain and even widen as enterprise requirements for ICT applications continue to accelerate. This creates an ideal commercial opportunity for the Council to invest in future-proofed technology to offer viable alternative solutions to SMEs.
- 3.22 The emergence of 5G and increased capacity mobile communications (macro cells and WiFi) will depend on ensuring future-proofed fibre broadband networks are in place in time to provide alternative solutions.
- 3.23 **Colchester Borough Council Digital Strategy and actions:** CBC has been seeking to deliver against its Digital Strategy for the Borough which was developed in 2010. The Strategy addresses economic, community and social needs from an enhanced digital infrastructure for the urban third and rural two-thirds of the Council's area. To date, the following has been achieved:
- 3.23.1 The Strategy and discussions with BT led to the enablement of four exchanges in addition to the one announced, enhancing coverage from the residential FTTC service.
 - 3.23.2 Town Centre WiFi in partnership with Arqiva went live in December 2014 through the Council's concession of sites, providing 4G services to residents, visitors and business users with 24/7 access to three websites, including Jobcentre Plus.
 - 3.23.3 A lease by the Council has been conceded to County Broadband Ltd to cover underserved urban businesses and premises in the Town Centre and to form part of a wider coverage network.
 - 3.23.4 Market investigation with two fibre providers has identified potential projects in the urban area but which cannot meet the business case of the providers.
 - 3.23.5 Liaison with local businesses and external consultants, including connectivity providers, in relation to the Superfast Essex project (BDUK) has established the clear need for the current Project and the above interventions.

Conclusion and key changes from the previous submission

- 3.24 In conclusion, the reworked Project is an important initiative in a range of local, alternative approaches across the UK which is seeking to future-proof the broadband delivery marketplace and in particular offer ultra-high speed connectivity to support business growth, particularly in identified key growth sectors such as digital, creative and financial services. The strengths of this reworked project are:
- 3.24.1 A sharper focus on areas of Colchester and market segments with monetisable connectivity needs. While roll-out begins in the town centre, this is a scalable solution that the Council envisages as having a much larger geographical reach within 2-3 years.

- 3.24.2 Pinpointed co-investment between the Council and market providers offering far greater value for money in impact and outcomes. The Council will expect any successful tenderer bidding for operation of the fibre optic network to provide a 50% cost match towards hardware, set-up and operational costs of the segment(s) they operate; CBC income will be derived from a revenue share and ROI from leasing of Council-owned CCTV ducting.
- 3.24.3 The network will be future-proofed and will allow operators to offer multiple connectivity solutions, including fixed WiFi, fibre optic connections to the premises (FTTP) and Ethernet to the first mile.
- 3.24.4 We mitigate State Aid risks by ensuring that no bidding operator will be allowed to contract use of the network/segments of the network on an exclusive basis.
- 3.24.5 The operator(s) will be tasked with providing a 'business class' connectivity solution with guaranteed 24/7 resilience.
- 3.24.6 The Project offers a market-disruptive solution through an affordable and competitive offer which will be heavily marketed to current and future SME subscribers.
- 3.24.7 The 'passive infrastructure model' used in this Project has been very successfully deployed in Sweden by the municipal fibre operator, Stokab. The experience of this company, which now provides FTTP connectivity to 100% of businesses in Sweden, has been carefully studied during the preparation of the Business Case.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The costs of implementing the Project have been based on CBC's consultant's expertise of the market and his proven track record of achievement in rolling out comparable projects. These costs will be held to wider market scrutiny by the Council since State Aid advice requires that no subsidy – even indirect - is conferred upon the commercial partners.
- 4.2 As per the previous award of funding for the project ECC, as the accountable body currently holding £200,000 of funding for this project, will be the conduit to transmit these funds from SELEP to the Project.
- 4.3 ECC have received a ring-fenced capital grant from SELEP for £200,000. ECC will enter into a grant agreement with CBC on terms which mirror arrangements with SELEP. Payment of the grant to CBC will only be made upon: (i) execution of a grant agreement with CBC approved by the respective ECC and CBC s151 officers; and (ii) confirmation by CBC of compliance with State Aid rules.
- 4.4 In line with the SELEP grant conditions the terms and conditions of the grant agreement will not include a clause to clawback the funding awarded.

Supporting information

- 4.5 NGA Broadband (Fibre) project forms part of the Borough-wide Digital Strategy and that a % of income generated will be prioritised through the Council's Revolving Investment Fund towards a future extension of the project to extend community connectivity.
- 4.6 Consequently, the engagement of Council funds in this instance must now, irrespective of the wider socio-economic benefits for the Borough and other Council projects, demonstrate where possible some income generation for the Authority. It has also always been the case that where s106 funding has been engaged by the

Council in relation to a commercially-managed service or partner, that a level of return has been sought by Planning colleagues responsible for administering these funds.

- 4.7 The revenue return for the Council is designed to support further expansion of business broadband coverage through an aspirational, Phase 2, coverage project including Colchester Northern Gateway
- 4.8 At tender stage, due diligence will be exercised in scrutinising the capability of the chosen operator to manage this level of capital investment. Adequate attention will be paid to thorough credit worthiness assessment.

Allocation of funding between Project partners

- 4.9 The following financial modelling has been developed in the light of specific State Aid advice. The costs include a small amount of revenue directly associated with the delivery of capital investment on the Council's side (Council time and costs in securing planning permissions, commissioning of any specialist third parties to negotiate wayleaves as well as capital costs - surveys, civil engineering, and acquisition of ducting and any other required hardware and equipment). These costs fully reflect total capital investment by the Council (including associated revenue - of which an element is a permitted contribution by the *de minimis* rules) to deliver the Project and also be EU State Aid-compliant.

Funding contribution	Amount
CBC (capital release)	£141,764
CBC (associated revenue costs) (LEP grant)	£118,235
LEP funding (de minimis, associated revenue costs) (LEP grant)	£81,765
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>£341,764</i>
Network operator (match-funding on deployment, set-up, acquisition of active hardware and operational costs, stipulated in tender & contract)	£187,018
Total	£528,782

- 4.10 The illustrative figures in the spreadsheet on the following page indicate a ROI of 9-11% within 8-9 years, based on a return on leasing of the Council's ducting by the network operator(s) and a 30-50% share of revenues from subscribing customers. This is the median share for comparable project, and the Council believes this income stream to be resilient.
- 4.11 The value of the Council-owned duct is declared and a yearly return is generated from leasing it to the network operator(s). This is commercial use of an existing asset that currently has no recorded value.
- 4.12 This asset will be readied by spending £600 per customer for the first 200 customers on the first network segment (Creative Business Centre, St Botolph's Quarter, Town Centre and Middleborough). This spend can be reduced to £400, but the initial segment must prove the viability of the model, resilience of returns, and establish a public perception of reliability and value-for-money, before further network segments can be created. Depreciation and maintenance costs relating to the ducting have been added.
- 4.13 The network rollout is envisaged in planned units of 'passive extensions' costed at £70,000, adding to the initial build to support the Creative Business Centre. The singular focus on building passives and seeking a return on this investment in

partnership with one or more partners will permit CBC to build and provision for the Creative Business Centre and then extend the network as customers are ready to commit and the revenue model is proven.

- 4.14 The annual retail broadband revenue for basic connectivity would be £75,000 per year. The wholesale revenue would be £45,000 and the Council would expect a passive partner share of £22,500 in the first year of operation. Out of prudence, we value the duct at £70 per meter depreciated over 40 year, while seeking a c. 8% annual return on the leased duct for costing purposes.
- 4.15 Active elements and backhaul costs will be covered by the operator(s); the Council will not become involved in these. There is the potential, as the network expands, to include additional revenues arising from value added services, including rack rental, additional accommodation for network passives, street furniture etc. These cannot be quantified at this stage.
- 4.16 The roll-out of the second segment would be launched as soon as the financial viability of the first segment, its technical reliability and the attractiveness of it as a connectivity solution, are proven. This would be likely to begin in the second half of 2016. The segmented nature of the roll-out is a measure designed specifically to reduce the commercial risks associated with the project, which the Council believes in any case to be low.
- 4.17 For illustrative purposes, CBC takes 33% of the wholesale revenue a month in the spreadsheet on the next page.

Colchester BC Passive Access Fibre/Ducting - Illustrative Proof of Concept											
Duct Asset Value	£70 per metre										
Maintenance	2.50%										
Expected life	40 years										
Cost of Capital	8.50%										
Operational costs	10.00%										
10 kilometre (Duct asset value)	£350,000										
Depreciation	2.5	Y1	Y2	y3	y4	y5	y6	y7	y8	y9	
Inflation											
Cost of Relying network	£600										
Replacement cost of 1km segment - Value of asset		£70,000	£72,100	£74,263	£76,491	£78,786	£81,149	£83,584	£86,091	£88,674	
Depreciation		£1,750	£1,803	£1,857	£1,912	£1,970	£2,029	£2,090	£2,152	£2,217	
Maintenance		£1,750	£1,803	£1,857	£1,912	£1,970	£2,029	£2,090	£2,152	£2,217	
Cost of Capital		£5,950	£6,129	£6,312	£6,502	£6,697	£6,898	£7,105	£7,318	£7,537	
Desired Return on CCTV duct		£9,450	£9,734	£10,026	£10,326	£10,636	£10,955	£11,284	£11,622	£11,971	
Relying segment 1 and 2	200	£120,000									
Total Accumulated return needed		£129,450	£139,184	£149,209	£159,535	£170,171	£181,126	£192,410	£204,033	£216,004	
Revenue											
Customers		30	60	125	150	150	175	200	200	200	
Wholesale Arpu per connection	£30.00										
CBC passive cut 66%	£20										
CBC annual income low		£7,128	£14,256	£29,700	£35,640	£35,640	£41,580	£47,520	£47,520	£47,520	
Accumulated cash flow		£7,128	£21,384	£51,084	£86,724	£122,364	£163,944	£211,464	£258,984	£306,504	

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 CBC will remain the legal owner of the passive infrastructure (ducting, fibre, masts) but will not own active equipment and will not be involved in marketing, maintenance or promotion of retail services.
- 5.2 The Project will offer an attractive and scalable proposition to potential investors and operators, and its roll-out is likely to stimulate the market, particularly in encouraging the accelerated roll-out of FTTP solutions by BT and others. Investment in the passive network infrastructure (purchase and installation of the fibre optic cable, connection to backhaul and all associated works) will be price-matched by an equivalent or greater investment on network hardware, marketing, roll-out and operation, by the chosen operator selected by public tender.
- 5.3 It should be noted that the Council has taken extensive legal advice over potential State Aid issues in reworking the initial project, and believe that by basing the project on an open-access model for the network operator(s) any potential issues / conflicts are avoided. They will not be given exclusive rights to operate the network, all of parts of which will remain open to other future operators.

6. Staffing and other resource implications

- 6.1 No staffing implications beyond those of existing CBC project team will be required.
- 6.2 When let, contractors will be responsible for employing sufficient staff to ensure the effective delivery of the project.
- 6.3 Progress on the Project will be managed on through various existing meeting arrangements: the Colchester Economic Growth Board, the Integrated Growth Forum and the Greater Essex Business Board

7. Equality and Diversity implications

- 7.1 An equality and diversity audit was completed for the original project. The geographic scope and beneficiaries from this project are not expected to change significantly.
- 7.2 It is unlikely that the provision of broadband through this project will have an overtly positive or negative impact on any specific race or gender, however the scheme will be monitored