

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

Report for meeting 12.4.21

Re: Community Fibre Partnership

Purpose of report: To update councillors on progress and developments

Report Author: Richard Burrows

2 of the 4 schemes within the Parish (Little Green and Church Land Cotheridge) have now progressed to the stage where those residents/businesses who signed up have had e mails from the Department of Culture, Media and Sports, asking them to confirm so that the voucher can be released to Openreach.

This will enable Openreach to set a project start and end date. It is also understood that at this point the Parish Council who are acting as Legal Entity/Community Fibre Partnership will be asked to formalise its role.

There were a number of hiccups re the issuing of e mails but we have worked closely with Openreach to resolve these, and as far as we know all have responded or are being followed up.

As councillors will be aware from previous reports and updates, the current scheme has ended, however the Government has now announced the replacement scheme, and the Broadwas main village scheme will be carried forward. It is understood that further details and requirements will be available in June, when it is hoped to be able to finalise this scheme. This will be dependent on the availability of any "top up" funding, as although we have now attracted sufficient commitment this was dependent on being topped up from the WCC fund. If for any reason this is not available and or the terms are different, we may need to reconsider a further effort to attract interest.

We will continue to promote the scheme as any additional sign up's between now and June are clearly going to help.

The 4th and smallest scheme is being reviewed in part because it crosses parish boundaries and we will work with the WCC project team on this.

Again, thanks to Cllr Cullen and residents who have continued to support the schemes.