

Subject: Broadband and Wifi

Report to: Economy Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 11 July 2012

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This paper proposes that the Committee discusses the provision of broadband and public wifi in London with experts, London businesses and other stakeholders.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to the guests listed in paragraph 4.1, and notes the answers given in response.**

3. Background

- 3.1 On 20 June 2012 the Committee agreed to use its July meeting to discuss broadband and wifi in London. The objectives of the meeting are:
- To examine why London lags behind in broadband supply and what the impact of this is.
 - To assess whether the ongoing broadband improvement programmes will meet London's needs.
 - To monitor the delivery of Mayoral programmes for public wifi provision.
 - To inform the scope of future investigations by the Committee relating to this topic.
- 3.2 The Committee decided to invite experts and stakeholders, including representatives of London business, internet service providers and policy-makers, to discuss this topic. Key issues that will be discussed during the meeting are:
- The impact of broadband infrastructure on London's economic performance, including in specific economic sectors.
 - Challenges faced by London businesses in relation to broadband supply.
 - The progress of the government's broadband strategy and BT's upgrade programme.
 - The appropriate role of government and Mayoral intervention in this area.
 - How to meet any funding shortages for broadband rollout.
 - Reducing the gaps between advertised and actual broadband speeds.
 - The rollout of public wifi and London Underground wifi provision.

4. Issues for Consideration

4.1 A number of expert guests and stakeholders have been invited to the meeting to discuss this topic with the Committee. Appearing at the meeting will be, from 2pm:

- David Hodges, Digital Policy Adviser, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Mike Butcher, European Editor, TechCrunch;
- Robert Milne, Partner, Antelope Consulting; and
- Greg McCulloch, UK Managing Director, Interxion.

From approximately 3pm:

- Andrew Campling, General Manager, London, BT Group;
- Jon James, Executive Director, Broadband, Virgin Media;
- Mark Kleinman, Assistant Director, Economic and Business Policy, Greater London Authority; and
- Phil Saw, Deputy Programme Director Broadband Delivery UK, Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
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