



Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Super Connected Communities: IT Infrastructure Update
Date:	19 November 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officers:	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager, ext 3525

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	In November 12, Development Committee agreed to invest in a network of public access computer suites across the city in support of the community outreach and capability strand of the Super Connected Belfast Programme. In February 13 Members agreed the 12 proposed locations: allocation across the city in 8 direct managed community centres and 4 independently managed/ owned centres.
1.2	Most recently, committee accepted an offer of DSD Community Support Programme additional in-year grant income, part of which has been set aside for implementation support and an animation scheme to support the introduction of suites.
1.3	The proposal was originally scoped to avail of the Super Connected Belfast voucher scheme targeted through the business community and was an opportunity to upgrade existing IT infrastructure in local community suites.
1.4	It was hoped the 12 centres chosen would benefit from the Super connected voucher scheme however the controls placed on the market test by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport nationally meant that the 12 hubs were not eligible in the first phase of the scheme. A decision on the further roll out of the scheme is anticipated at the end of November.
1.5	There is a high level of interest in when the 12 community suites will be operational given the current challenges around connectivity and set up. We have completed an outline review to consider the impact of this and in order to proceed without further delay we intend to deliver the project in phases. The initial stage will see the installation of the IT infrastructure (e.g. the computer equipment, furniture, etc) and this has been scheduled with support from Digital Services on a site by site basis based on their state of readiness by end of December 2013. The first 8 suites are being scheduled this month.
1.6	It is anticipated that the Secretary of State for DCMS will announce the decision

	on the full rollout of the voucher scheme early in November. If the scheme is approved, it will see us opening up the full scheme across the whole of Belfast. Aligned to the voucher opportunity, we will support improvements to connectivity across the network.
1.7	This connectivity will enable us to maximise the scope of the planned animation programme to: launch this BCC investment; raise awareness of the programme in local neighbourhoods and target key audiences (eg children, young people, older people, LTE, etc

2	Key Issues
2.1	<u>Dedicated support</u> Given the complexity and specialist nature of the project, the service is seeking to recruit specialist commercial expertise to ensure effective installation, compliance, branding and programme animation. Critically this support will inform any future programme in order to align the community hub network resource to the future rollout of the Belfast Voucher scheme.
2.2	<u>Animation programme</u> Originally the animation programme was to be tendered as a single contract however the dedicated IT resource would support the development of a local animation programme based on identified needs analysis in partnership with each site to animate and stimulate demand and learning. This will be scheduled to co-ordinate the launch of any revised scheme during January 2014.
2.3	<u>Safeguarding and compliance</u> Service level agreements are scoped for the equipment issued to the independent centres to ensure they meet the compliance and safeguarding needs of a public access scheme. We have drafted an acceptable use policy and are researching the potential for suite membership schemes as tools to support compliance management. The IT support would enable better understanding of the requirements for a pilot public access scheme.
2.4	<u>Budget and resources</u> There is a slight revision to the animation budget to allow for the dedicated IT support and localised animation phase which will no longer be in tender format. All of the above resources will be financed from the budget that committee has already committed to the community IT hub project.
2.5	<u>Super connected Belfast</u> It remains an option for centres to apply for a super connected voucher scheme if they become available and we will offer council support to enable application. The independent centres however would be responsible for the additional costs associated with the connection and servicing of this as before with their broadband schemes.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	No resource implications as all amendments are being included within existing programme costs.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no relevant equality and good relations implications

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are requested to note the contents of the report which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Confirms the operational steps taken to implement the new IT infrastructure into the community suites; ii. Outlines the next steps in the progression of the programme, specifically to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide a dedicated IT support to implement and create a compliant scheme and to co-ordinate programming; b. Roll out a localised animation programme, and c. Revise the budget accordingly.

6	Decision Tracking
The CYP manager will implement the agreed actions.	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DSD - Department for Social Development	