

Living in Hackney

Introducing the better
broadband programme

Henry Lewis - Head of Platform
9 March 2021



Presentation content

- Context:
 - Strategy and vision
 - Why is connectivity important
 - manifesto commitments
 - What our tenants think
- What is the better broadband programme?
- Benefits we will deliver
- Next steps



The context

- The Council lacked an overarching strategy to improve connectivity in the borough - the Mayor asked ICT to provide one
- [Our vision for connectivity in Hackney](#) was agreed by Hackney Cabinet in December 2018
- The vision included a commitment to “use Council assets to deliver and maximise social value and economic opportunities for the residents and businesses of Hackney instead of using assets to maximise income”
- These assets include our buildings. The better broadband programme is focused upon leveraging our housing stock to provide more affordable, high performing broadband services for social housing tenants



Why was connectivity important before the pandemic?

- Job search - easier access to jobs and support online to make applications
- Education - access to the internet is a vital tool to support learning
- Shopping - people shopping online save money
- economic development - lots of SMEs in digital and media services
- And lots more reasons besides....



And why is it even more important now?

- Home schooling
- To keep in touch with families and friends
- So people can work from home
- A source of entertainment



Our manifesto commitments

Our core commitment: - “Push the market to provide Hackney with fast consistent internet connectivity, including using the borough’s assets to encourage suppliers to invest in improved connectivity across the borough”

Other relevant commitments: “We will continue to invest in and develop our temporary accommodation provision in Hackney, **including improving facilities**, support and consulting with residents on their priorities”

“We will improve Hackney’s digital inclusion; increasing the number of digital skills training courses available to supporting residents getting online for the first time”



What do our tenants think?

Positive responses received from:

- **Our tenants** - we surveyed tenants in the Autumn of 2019 and received an overwhelmingly positive response to these proposals. Tenants prioritised:
 - Higher performing services
 - Affordable services
 - Digital inclusion

The [consultation report](#) is online

- **The tenants liaison group**



Summary of the programme

- New connectivity providers will be implementing high performing, more affordable broadband into our housing blocks and street properties
- They will do this at no cost to the Council - they are funding new roles in Housing to support the management of the programme
- Tenants will have a choice about whether to sign up or not
- We will also receive a range of social value benefits from the providers to support some of our most vulnerable residents
- Programme will run for between 2 and 3 years



More affordable broadband

Provider	Cost per month (including VAT) by average download speed (mbps)			
	50 - 150 mbps	150-300 mbps	300-520 mbps	900-1000 mbps
Full fibre provider (average)	£21	£31	£41	£49
Virgin Media (cable)	£29	£34	£46	N/A
BT (Openreach copper network)	£32	N/A	N/A	N/A

Social value benefits

- Free full fibre internet in perpetuity for key council services:
 - temporary hostels
 - Housing with Care schemes
 - Housing community halls
 - Childrens' centres
- Each provider to prove 40 free connections
- Council and/or RSLs will deliver free WiFi to these sites



Social value benefits (cont)

- Vouchers to one in ten of every households that are connected
 - Vouchers to be targeted by the Council to households in financial hardship
 - Further, free connections may now be available for 12 months to vulnerable households with school age children
- Digital skills training
- Apprenticeships and employment opportunities

Why this is a good deal for Hackney

Benefit	Southwark	Brent	Tower Hamlets	Camden	Croydon	WCC
Free connections	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Voucher scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Digital Skills training	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Local Employment benefits	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Subsidised connectivity for Housing services	N	N	N	N	N	N

Next steps

- Signing up more providers
- Agreeing the roll out schedules
- Delivering the comms plan for the programme
- Further discussions with RSLs
- Agreeing criteria for targeting vouchers
- Further liaison with voluntary sector partners

Questions and Discussion

