

Digital Connectivity Working Group Update

Author: Ceren Clulow

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Since the last update report in February 2022, the ADEPT Digital Connectivity Working Group has met twice virtually in April and July attendance from Local Authorities across the UK, but also from D2N2 LEP and Local Government Association (LGA).

Local Authority representatives from Wolverhampton, Somerset, Herefordshire, Cambridgeshire, Kent, Barnsley, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, and South Gloucestershire were present in both of the meetings.

Meeting No. 1 (April 2022) The Group received presentations from:

- a) Will Plant – Digital Inclusion Programme Manager about the Digital Connectivity Toolkit. The toolkit has been created by City of Westminster, in conjunction with the Local Government Association with the aim to share the best practice and lessons learned from their experience of working to improve full fibre connectivity in a highly urban environment. Link to the toolkit itself can be found on [Digital Connectivity Toolkit \(webpublication.co.uk\)](https://webpublication.co.uk)
- b) Gareth Elliott from Mobile UK updated the group members on:
 - The Shared Rural Network
 - Issues about the planning applications and the increase on the number rejections

Gareth also mentioned that they were working on a Digital Champions report which requires support to publicise the report as widely as possible. The report has been published on the 10th May and can be found here:

https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5b7ab54b285dec5c113ee24d/6273e1737caa08e351ba5dfe_Digital-Champions.pdf

Meeting No. 2 (July 2022) The Group received presentations from:

- c) The Local Government Association's Digital Champion and Gloucestershire County Leader, Councillor Mark Hawthorne MBE about Digital Connectivity Champions. Mark talked about how 5G will enable councils and councillors to deliver their digital transformation strategies and used real life examples to illustrate this. As examples, he stated how 5G will allow all to use smart data, deliver smart services and create smart communities. Mark also explained how councillors play an integral role in ensuring local communities have a better awareness and understanding of 5G.

The meeting agenda then continued with a great link to Mobile UK's slot where Gareth shared the details of their recently published "The Case for Local Authority Digital Champions" (link above).

The next meeting is on 29th September 2022 at 2pm (virtual).