

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF DECISION

SUBJECT: CONNECT WESTMINSTER PROJECT APPROVAL

Notice is hereby given that , Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and Heritage, has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

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The CM is asked to authorise the council to enter a grant agreement with the GLA for the Connect Westminster Project.

The CM is further requested to authorise the delivery of the Connect Westminster Project as set out within the appended grant agreement.

Authorise capital expenditure against the budget within the capital programme of £2.8m of which £1.4m will be funded from the EDRF grant and £1.4m will be funded by the Council.

Approve the Council to enter into the agreement for the EDRF grant.

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Summary of Decision

- 1 The CM was asked to authorise the council to enter a grant agreement with the GLA for the Connect Westminster Project.
- 2 The CM was further requested to authorise the delivery of the Connect Westminster Project as set out within the appended grant agreement.
- 3 Authorise capital expenditure against the budget within the capital programme of £2.8m of which £1.4m would be funded from the EDRF grant and £1.4m would be funded by the Council.
- 4 Approved the Council to enter into the agreement for the EDRF grant.

Reasons for Decision

The rationale for investing within the Connect Westminster Project was as follows:

1. The unmet demand from the previous London connection voucher scheme.
2. The cost of deploying infrastructure within Westminster was higher than other London Boroughs.
3. Mapping exercises indicate that the main areas of the borough in which businesses were based did not have access to next generation broadband.
4. Two-thirds of business premises in Westminster were in areas without access to superfast broadband. This would continue to suppress economic performance and employment over the period 2016-2020.

Following the successful delivery of the previous London wide scheme, there was evidence to suggest a positive impact on both productivity and the ability to hire staff. An independent economic appraisal based on the findings of the London wide scheme estimates that the new Connect Westminster Project would provide the following economic benefits:

- A sum of between £192m to £280m net additional GVA generated for the local economy within a 10-year period. This represented an economic rate of return of between £68 and £100, per £1 of project expenditure.
- A total of between 2,000 to 2,750 gross jobs created.

In summary then, the current market failure within Westminster and the significant expected return on investment justifies this intervention.

Reasons for Decision

**Charlie Parker, Chief Executive,
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Implementation Date:

Reference: