

WRITTEN QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 44

1. Question by Councillor Davies to the Lead Member for Economy

As the third contract with BT for superfast Broadband finishes this summer, there will still be 2-3% of “hard to reach” households/businesses with no Broadband or very poor coverage.

Will East Sussex County Council guarantee to find funding for these last few people to receive superfast broadband so that there is equity across the county?

Answer by the Lead Member for Economy

We are not in a position to give any guarantees about funding but we can certainly guarantee to do all we can to achieve our ambition of as close to 100% superfast coverage as possible. As of today, superfast coverage is 97% across the county compared to only 63% when the County Council and BDUK jointly-funded project began in May 2013.

There is a clause in each of the three contracts that requires BT to return funding to East Sussex County Council as customer take up of superfast services rises above BT forecasts. To date, take up has consistently been higher than forecasts. This means that there will be “gainshare” funding which can be used for re-investment in broadband infrastructure although we are not yet in a position to know exactly how much that will be. In addition to that, the Chancellor has committed £5bn of public funding to support the rollout of full-fibre, 5G and other gigabit-capable networks to the hardest-to-reach 20% of the country. Whilst we have no detail on that yet we will certainly make sure that we secure our share of the funding when it becomes available

2. Question by Councillor Field to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

What happens to the heat generated at the Energy from Waste plant at Newhaven?

Answer by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Currently the heat generated (steam) at Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility is converted back into water through the closed loop cycle water system.

The Newhaven Heat Network Partnership was set up in collaboration with the Government’s Heat Network Delivery Unit, East Sussex County Council, Veolia, Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council to investigate, by way of feasibility study(s), whether we can use excess heat from the Energy Recovery Facility to provide heat and hot water to the businesses of Newhaven through a network of pipes around the town. The feasibility study concluded in October 2016 that there was not a sufficient 'base load' to progress.

There is another round of funding in progress for a further study. Further detailed information regarding current funding and progress can be sought from Susie Mullins: Susie.Mullins@newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk.