IMAGINE RYEDALE…

REPORT TO:	Ryedale Strategic Partnership Board
DATE:	**26 January 2012**
REPORTING OFFICER:	Jos Holmes Economy and Community Manager
SUBJECT:	**Rural Broadband update**

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the development of the Ryedale Broadband project.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Members note the report.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 At the previous meeting of the Ryedale SP Board, a presentation was made outlining the project 'Next Generation Broadband in Ryedale; identifying community aspirations'.

4 POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 RDC Aim 2: Creating conditions for economic success
Ryedale SP Priority: Access and Rural Transport

REPORT

5.1 Three community meetings were held around Ryedale to ascertain the demand for high speed broadband. A report of these meetings is attached in annex A.

5.2 Subsequently, steering groups were established to take the projects forward.

5.3 The process for allocating the Performance Reward Grant (PRG) funding to roll out these schemes has been delayed. The PRG funding is now subject to a procurement exercise to ensure that EU regulations are complied with and to widen the pool of potential Internet Service Providers (ISPs) available. This exercise is due to be completed in May 2012, and will be followed by 'mini competitions' at each location to determine the best ISP to design, build and operate the local service

5.4 The 'Identifying community aspirations' project is now looking at further locations in Sheriff Hutton and Dalby as priority areas.

5.5 Outside of the RLSP project, the 'Rosedale Extension' scheme was approved for PRG funding in 2011, although it has not yet received the grant to enable residents and businesses to get connected.

5.6 Ryedale District Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership are to work together on a pilot scheme for the Business Engagement project, to encourage small businesses to take up and utilise high speed broadband to grow their business. This will be launched in January 2012 and will run for approximately 6 months.

OFFICER CONTACT:
Please contact: Jos Holmes
                    Economy and Community Manager
                    Ryedale District Council

If you require any further information on the contents of this report,
the officer can be contacted at:

Tel: 01653 600666 ext 240
Email: jos.holmes@ryedale.gov.uk

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Ryedale Broadband – Community Meetings Project Report – November 2011
3 community meetings were planned as part of the 'Identifying Community Aspirations' project and in response to the field research undertaken in the summer. These were:

1 South West Ryedale
Parishes – Acklam (Leppington); Barton le Willows ; Buttercrambe with Bossall ; Claxton ; Crambe ; Gate Helmsley ; Harton ; Sand Hutton ; Upper Helmsley ; Warthill ;   Acklam ; Howsham ; Scrayingham
2 Ampleforth
Parishes - Ampleforth ; Byland with Wass ; Cawton ; Gilling East ; Oldstead ; Oswaldkirk ; Stonegrave
3 Great Wolds Valley
Parishes - Foxholes ; Kirby Grindalythe ; Luttons ; Thixendale ; Weaverthorpe ; Wharram ; Wintringham

Invitations and publicity were sent in advance to local businesses, community contacts, parish councils and elected members. A press release was issued and run in the Gazette & Herald.

The meetings were hosted by the local community champions, in the evening. NYCC Community Education provided the IT Skills Mobile for an hour prior to each event, connected via satellite to the internet. Refreshments were provided at the start of the meeting with Maggie Farey and Sarah Robinson (Rural Action Yorkshire) on hand to welcome people in. A display with general information was put up, including some information on planning and safety issues and some marketing material from the local Internet Service Providers. Each attendee was given an agenda, (containing Jos Holmes' contact details) and a basic information leaflet on high speed broadband.

Each meeting followed the same general format. The opening presentation was made by Jos Holmes, RDC, followed by Ian Marr / Simon Lealman, NYCC to give the Connecting North Yorkshire background. Then a community broadband provider presented their live examples (many thanks to Billy Garret and Barry Sunley for this), followed by Phil Beadnall from LN Communications (many thanks to him as well) who provided information and examples of the type of kit that would be required and technical details, then took the meeting into a Q&A session. This was the most fruitful part of the meeting with questions regarding planning requirements, costs and current contracts, mobile phone coverage, reliability, where is the local point of presence (POP), is there a line of sight in an area with a lot of trees, planning implications – especially on listed buildings or in conservation areas, who would be providing the service, when is this going to happen and why aren't BT being more proactive? Most importantly: what next?

The South West Ryedale (@ Sand Hutton) meeting had 63 attendees with 18 offering to be part of the steering group.
The Ampleforth meeting had 60 attendees with 9 offering to be on the steering group.
The Great Wolds Valley (@ Luttons) meeting had 31 attendees with 7 offering to be on the steering group. It is worth noting that some attendees to this meeting were there on behalf of a number of others, so it is felt that the demand will keep rolling in.

The next stage is to request a technical survey from NYnet to ascertain if:
(a) the POP is viable and
(b) is the geographic area covered by our community meetings technically possible.

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We will then be working with the steering groups to develop the local business plan required by Connecting North Yorkshire to take the projects forward. Given previous information is still correct, the community meetings did generate sufficient demand to take forward high speed broadband in Ryedale.

It is worth noting that Craven, Selby and Scarborough have requested a copy of all the paper based and IT based presentation material and Selby CC attended the first meeting. Ryedale has led the way with this project.

Jos Holmes
Community Co-ordinator, Ryedale.