



The County Economic
Development Partnership

PRESS RELEASE

Welcome for Broadband Funding

Embargoed Midnight May 26th

26th May 2011

Economic development partnership Shaping Norfolk's Future has expressed delight at the news the county's multi-million pound bid for broadband funding has been approved by the Government.

Norfolk County Council submitted a bid to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) in April for £15m from a £530m national fund to bring superfast broadband to rural areas.

The council's bid was one of three given the go ahead today (thurs). The other successful councils were Wiltshire and a joint bid from Devon and Somerset who share a funding pot of £50m.

The bid was supported by a range of partners including Shaping Norfolk's Future, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

Mark Hodges, chairman of Shaping Norfolk's Future and chief executive of Aviva UK, said: "This is tremendous news. Bringing superfast broadband to Norfolk is one of Shaping Norfolk's Future's top priorities and this funding will enable that to happen.

"The project will create jobs and be a huge boost for business. It will make Norfolk a much more attractive place for businesses to operate in.

"I want to pay tribute to the team behind the bid and particularly to Norfolk County Council and its members who have shown tremendous leadership over this."

Caroline Williams, chief executive of Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, said: "Winning the bid is fantastic news for Norfolk. Out of the 21 bids we were one of only three to succeed, so this really puts the region on the map. This will enable businesses to communicate more effectively and be instrumental in creating jobs for Norfolk and moving the economy forward."

Shaping Norfolk's Future worked closely with Norfolk County Council in developing the bid for BDUK.

The partnership has been lobbying for improved broadband for Norfolk for the past two years after identifying it as a key priority, developing a dedicated website, www.broadbandnorfolk.com , lobbying service providers and stimulating demand.

Mike Burrows, deputy chairman of Shaping Norfolk's Future, said: "This announcement is tremendously important and follows the success of our campaign to dual the A11.

"We know how important the internet is for business and it means Norfolk firms will be able to compete on an equal footing."

Ends

For further information contact

Chris Starkie
Chief executive
Shaping Norfolk's Future

(01603) 224483
(07827) 309669