



Report of the Bradford West Area Co-ordinator to the meeting of Bradford West Area Committee to be held on Wednesday 12 July 2023

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Subject:

UPDATE BT DIGITAL VOICE PROGRAMME

Summary statement:

Earlier this year, we announced that we would be contacting customers about the switch to our digital home phone service, Digital Voice on a region-by-region basis from the summer. We also expanded our Digital Voice trials with a small group of customers beyond the pilots in Salisbury and Mildenhall, made up of lower usage landline customers, who have a full fibre broadband connection already.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

There are no issues arising from the Council's Equality & Diversity Strategy.

Strategic Director, Place

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Portfolio:

Neighbourhood * Customer Services

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

[Insert where appropriate]

1. SUMMARY

Earlier this year, we announced that we would be contacting customers about the switch to our digital home phone service, Digital Voice on a region-by-region basis from the summer. We also expanded our Digital Voice trials with a small group of customers beyond the pilots in Salisbury and Mildenhall, made up of lower usage landline customers, who have a full fibre broadband connection already.

2. BACKGROUND

Over the last 6 weeks, we've upgraded the last remaining eligible customers to Digital Voice in Salisbury and Mildenhall, and around 35,000 lower usages, full fibre broadband customers from our expanded trial. In total, we've now got around two million customers across the country using Digital Voice.

Customer feedback from these trials has also been really positive, which has given us confidence to now extend these trials further to a wider group of customers across the country who are ready to make the switch. From this week, we will be contacting all full fibre and a smaller group of broadband customers yet to switch to Digital Voice.

As before, we won't be proactively switching customers who fall under any of the below criteria, where we have this information available:

- Customers with a healthcare pendant
- Customers who are over 70
- Customers who only use landlines
- Customers with no mobile signal
- Customers who have disclosed any additional needs

These customers will be delayed from switching as work continues with stakeholder groups to build confidence in the new solutions we have, help to shape the solutions we're developing and help them to better understand the support available to make the move.

Preparing for our regional approach

From the summer, customers will be encouraged to make the switch to Digital Voice on a region-by-region basis. The first three regions will be the **East Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside**, and **Northern Ireland**. In addition, customers who are ready and keen to make the switch to Digital Voice, can also contact us at any time, as many have continued to do.

Customers in these regions will be contacted at least four weeks before being upgraded, to help ensure they're ready to make the switch. For the vast majority of customers, the move to Digital Voice simply involves connecting a landline phone to a BT broadband router. More than 99% of phone handsets are compatible with our Digital Home Phone service and for those that aren't, we have a range of handsets that customers can add to their order.

The regional approach will be supported by general awareness communications, and advertising campaigns, delivered across local and regional media to explain to customers the simple steps required to make the move to Digital Voice. BT will also be present on high streets across the country and at local town hall drop-ins to directly address customer questions on the ground.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 N/A

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 No financial issues arising

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 None arising

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 N/A

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None

7.5 TRADE UNION

None

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

➤ For further guidance contact the Bradford West Area Co-ordinator.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE LOCALITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

(for reports to Area Committees only)

- For further guidance contact the Bradford West Area Co-ordinator.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

None

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

None

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the update be noted.

11. APPENDICES

N/A

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

N/A