

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT – Q3 2017

Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce



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This is the third quarterly progress report of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Implementation Group, established by Government to monitor and drive implementation of the measures contained in the report of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce, published in December 2016¹.

It outlines progress made on measures due for action in the third quarter of 2017. The report also provides an update on actions for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 which were reported as delayed.

Summary of Progress Made

Communicating progress on all aspects of the NBP and raising awareness of the impact of the actions in delivering improved mobile and broadband services to consumers is an important aspect of the Taskforce Implementation Group's work programme.

The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce was represented at a stand in the overall National Broadband Plan Tent at the National Ploughing Championships in Tullamore on 19-21 September. The stand focused on raising awareness of measures being progressed to deliver improvements to mobile phone and broadband services, in addition to providing information on consumer issues such as mobile phone coverage and handsets. A number of Broadband Officers participated in the tent and engaged with the public to raise awareness of initiatives in their respective local authority areas.

A national stakeholder forum to discuss issues impacting on the rollout of telecoms infrastructure was held on 6 October in Athlone (in line with Action 1 of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce report). The primary goal of the Forum was to bring together key stakeholders to engage in an open dialogue on issues impacting on the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure. It also afforded an opportunity for stakeholders to highlight any barriers being experienced in the implementation of actions identified by the Taskforce, and to suggest new recommendations for the Taskforce to adopt in order to accelerate the provision of improved services to consumers.

¹ The report of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce is available at <http://dcaae.gov.ie/documents/Taskforce%20Report.pdf>

ComReg has commenced work on its forecast report which will include information on mobile data volumes and speeds, and fixed broadband connections and speeds. ComReg's research on mobile repeaters is also progressing with the feasibility research and consultation document envisaged to be published in Q4 2017. ComReg's online campaign, which raises awareness of new service provider obligations, will come into play from January 2018 and incorporates elements of the review of complaint handling procedures which has also been completed.

DTTAS is holding the first meeting of the Stakeholder User Forum in November. The Forum will provide a structured feedback and engagement system between stakeholders to address operational matters related to road opening and licensing practices.

TII motorway ducting works have been progressing well with installation completed on 80km of the M7/M8. In addition ducting work has been completed on 14km of the N25 in Cork. There continues to be strong engagement between telecoms operators and TII on identifying suitable sites on the motorway network for the location of telecoms infrastructure in order to improve mobile coverage.

On the planning side, drafting of legislation on Revised Exempted Developments is at an advanced stage and is expected to be presented to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government shortly for consideration and subsequently submitted for approval by both Houses of the Oireachtas.

Impact

Of the 12 actions for specific delivery in Quarter 3 or of an ongoing nature, all are being progressed with no measures reported as being delayed.

The National Ploughing Championships provided a rich opportunity to raise awareness of actions being progressed by the Taskforce Implementation process and to inform consumers on where to access information on the range of products and services available to them.

There was a low level of awareness by the general public of the work of the Taskforce, however when informed of the measures being progressed consumers were reassured by the level at which Government Departments, State bodies and industry are working together to bring about tangible results. Reaction to the appointment of Broadband Officers was very positive, with individuals welcoming a dedicated point of contact for engagement with telecoms operators in their local area.

People were interested to hear about the research ComReg is undertaking on the impact of building materials on indoor mobile phone coverage, and the potential for licensing mobile phone repeaters to address the coverage issues.

An important piece of feedback from the National Stakeholder Forum held in October was a strong welcome for the high level of engagement which is now taking place between stakeholders on a level which has not occurred up to this point. Attendees expressed the view that maintaining this consultation and engagement on an ongoing basis will be vitally important to removing barriers to the deployment of high quality telecommunications networks across the country, particularly in rural Ireland.

The placement of infrastructure, including masts, plays an important role in addressing mobile phone blackspot locations. The pilot project being undertaken by DRCD and DCCAE in conjunction with mobile operators and a number of local authorities is a significant step in identifying problem areas and any infrastructure that could potentially be used to provide additional coverage. The results of the pilot project may be used to create a formal blackspot engagement process between all local authorities and the telecommunications operators.

The ducting installation works being carried out by TII on the M7/M8 and the N25 will close gaps on sections of the motorway network and facilitate telecoms operators to deploy infrastructure to expand their networks along the route. The work being undertaken by TII in close liaison with the telecoms industry on identifying sites where additional infrastructure is required will result in improved mobile coverage along the motorway network.

Next Steps

The work of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce has been an important development in the delivery of vital telecommunications infrastructure across this country during 2017. A key element of the success that has emerged from the Taskforce Implementation process is the high level of bilateral engagement between key stakeholders and the strong spirit of co-operation which has emerged.

The Ministers would like to acknowledge the important contribution all action holders have played in progressing the actions contained in this third quarterly progress report, and to ask for their continued support and engagement to ensure the full implementation of all identified actions.

In order to assess the overall state of play, the Taskforce Implementation Group will carry out a fundamental review of progress made after twelve months and will produce an Annual Report in early 2018.

It will be important to capture any new innovations and emerging ideas to complement the progress already made on the existing actions and incorporate them into the work programme of the Taskforce going forward. For example, the discussions at the Forum held in early October have given rise to a number of new actions for consideration in the 2018 work programme of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce Implementation Group.

QUARTER 3 ACTIONS – PROGRESS UPDATES

Action 11: Ensure that broadband and mobile phone infrastructure providers have access to new on-line facilities for planning applications as part of the new e-planning arrangements.

Measure – Q3: As per headline action. (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government/local authorities/Local Government Management Agency).

Update (In Progress)

Development of the ePlanning system is ongoing and is currently running to schedule. Pilots are scheduled to commence in Q1 2018. Applications in relation to broadband and mobile phone infrastructure will be facilitated as part of the nationwide roll-out of e-planning and on-line access to planning services, as a key driver to delivering a more responsive planning system. The Planning and Development (Amendment) Bill 2016, currently progressing through the Oireachtas, will provide the underpinning legislation for e-planning which will see the introduction on of online planning applications, appeals and associated payment of fees.

Next Steps: The national roll-out of e-planning is expected for Q1 2018.

Action 13: The Northern and Southern Broadband Regional Action Groups will review and address barriers [within their remit] identified by Stakeholders as impacting on the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure in partnership with the local government sector.

Measure – Q3: Standardised approach agreed by local authorities. (Local authorities).

Update (Ongoing)

The Purple Book Guidelines provide for a standardised approach to the road opening licensing process. Broadband Officers are being kept up to date with proposals being put together to tackle other issues, such as alternative methods to full road openings e.g. micro-trenching. The local authority sector reaffirms its commitment to supporting and facilitating broadband infrastructure rollout. Further engagement and training for stakeholders is planned by the CCMA Land Use and Transportation Committee (LUTS). The LUTS Committee is also forming a sub-group to examine Section 254 licenses.

Next Steps: LUTS will co-ordinate with the RMO, the Broadband Officers in providing guidance/training to the local authority sector. The LUTS Committee will progress the establishment of the sub-group to examine Section 254 licenses.

ONGOING ACTIONS – QUARTER 3 UPDATES

Action 4: Run a public awareness campaign on all aspects of the National Broadband Plan and the work of the Taskforce.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (DCCAIE/DRCD).

Update (In Progress)

Ensuring consumers are kept well informed on progress made on all aspects of the National Broadband Plan and work of the Taskforce is a priority. DCCAIE and DRCD continue to advance opportunities to increase communications and awareness around the work of the Taskforce, aligned with the NBP, and in line with the communications and awareness plan.

DRCD continuously engages with all 31 local authorities through the bimonthly Northern and Southern Regional Action Groups, through subgroups on specific work items, and on a bilateral basis. DRCD also works closely with the CCMA and the LGMA, and provides a bi-monthly update report on the work of DRCD Regional Telecommunications Development Unit to the LUTS Committee.

Ploughing Championships

The Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce was represented in the National Broadband Plan tent at the National Ploughing Championships in Tullamore on 19-21 September. The stand focused on raising awareness of actions being progressed by the Taskforce and the engagement between stakeholders which is resulting in improvements to mobile phone and broadband services. The stand also provided information on consumer issues such as factors that can affect mobile phone coverage, identifying the best mobile phone to suit individual requirements and where to find information on operator network coverage.

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) also had a stand in the NBP tent to highlight the work of DRCD and the local authorities in preparing for the NBP state intervention and improving mobile and broadband services in each county. Broadband Officers provided information on broadband services and initiatives in their local authority area and produced an information leaflet for each county for distribution at the Ploughing Championships. A number of Broadband Officers manned the stand and engaged with the public to raise awareness of local initiatives.

Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce National Stakeholder Forum

As part of our ongoing public and stakeholder engagement, DCCAIE and DRCD convened a National Stakeholders Forum in Athlone on 6 October. The outputs from the Forum will feature in a report that will be published on the websites of both Departments. The report will also feed into a comprehensive 2017 review to be published in early 2018 and will inform the Taskforce Implementation Group Work Programme for 2018.

Next Steps: Any further opportunities will be taken to increase awareness among stakeholders and this will be a central theme of the 2018 Work Programme.

Action 5: In line with the Programme for Government commitment, the Government will ensure that appropriate funding is made available to support the timely rollout of the NBP.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (Government).

Update (In Progress)

On 29 September 2015 the Government agreed and published its 6 year Capital Plan - Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021, which included an initial provision of €275m for the National Broadband Plan (NBP). This represents an initial stimulus for the first five years of the NBP intervention, with remaining payments being spread over the full 25 years of the contract. The amounts required by bidders will only be known after bidders provide their initial estimates of cost and subsidy requirements.

The Government contribution towards the cost of delivering this project may be achieved through a combination of Exchequer and EIB sources. Funding of €75 million is committed under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) but this can only be drawn down after Exchequer expenditure is first incurred. Combined with commercial investment, this will ensure that 77% of Ireland's premises will have access to high speed broadband by end of 2018, with 90% access by 2020.

DCCAIE is engaged in a procurement process to select a company or companies who will roll-out a new high-speed broadband network within the State Intervention Area under the NBP.

Next Steps: DCCAIE'S specialist NBP team are now engaged in evaluating the 'Detailed Solutions' submitted on 26 September 2017 from the two bidders as part of that competitive procurement process. This is the last stage before bidders are invited to submit their final tenders and progression to the appointment of a preferred bidder(s).

Action 10: Telecoms operators will engage with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and local authorities in order to ensure that the Green Book is actively used to identify specific access sites. The Green Book will be reviewed, if necessary, in light of the experience gained from this engagement.

Measure – Ongoing as per headline action. (DTTAS/TII/local authorities/telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Telecoms Industry Federation (TIF) are in the process of identifying suitable sites for the accommodation of telecoms mast infrastructure on the motorway network based on the guidelines set out in the Green Book. TIF members have identified an initial 14 sites along the network. TII has undertaken a preliminary assessment of these sites followed by a meeting with TIF on 11 October to consider the initial assessment. In general terms the feedback was very positive in respect of site feasibility although a small number of sites have proved challenging. TII found the exercise very useful in terms of understanding the requirements of the telecoms industry. TII were of the view that the exercise also provided industry with a better appreciation of the constraints to the deployment of overground infrastructure along the motorway network. In the medium to longer term the established interface between TIF and TII will provide a beneficial platform for engagement on such issues as the rollout of 5G – particularly in relation to the anticipated deployment of connected and automated vehicles.

Next Steps: This will be an ongoing process. Continuing engagement between TII and TIF will be required to assist both parties in the identification and development of suitable sites in line with the guidance provided in the Green Book. Arising from the lessons learned from the process, DTTAS/TII will in due course make updates to the Green Book – however this will follow from the process of continuing engagement rather than as an end in itself.

Action 14: Non-commercial State bodies will ensure that no impediments are placed in the way of reasonable access to State-owned property.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (Non-commercial State bodies).

Update (In Progress)

Telecoms industry representatives have recently highlighted to the Implementation Group a number of impediments to accessing State-owned property. In light of these concerns, it is proposed to

include a new action in the Taskforce Implementation Group work programme centred on the development of a standardised policy, lease and costing arrangement for accessing and utilising State assets for the deployment of telecoms infrastructure.

Next Steps: DRCD and DCCAE to bring forward a proposal on a policy for standardising arrangements for accessing State-owned property sites for the installation of telecoms equipment.

Action 17: Telecommunications operators should identify, in consultation with local communities, where appropriate, optimal locations/areas in which they require additional infrastructure to improve coverage prior to engaging with local authorities and non-commercial State bodies. Industry will then engage with the single point of contact to scope and manage any issues and risks associated with site selection.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (Local authorities/local communities/Non-commercial State bodies/ telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

Operators are actively engaging on both a formal and informal basis with Broadband officers in all the local authorities and have reported that they are acting as a valuable liaison between industry and the local community. Operators have provided the Broadband Officers with nominated points of contact in their organisations in order to streamline engagement.

Mobile network operators and ComReg have provided mobile phone coverage maps. DRCD and DCCAE worked with a pilot group of local authorities to identify the issues associated with mapping local blackspots. The pilot exercise has since been completed, with all local authorities now being asked to map local blackspots and identify infrastructure that could potentially be used to provide additional coverage on an economic basis.

Next Steps: Telecommunications operators will continue to engage with local authorities through the Regional Action Groups (RAGs) and via the Broadband Officers. A subgroup of the RAGs is also focusing on developing a protocol to guide the engagement with industry.

Local authorities will map local mobile phone blackspots; for which the information received will be collated and used as a basis to further engage with the mobile operators.

Action 20: The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport will review the Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads (Purple Book) on an ongoing basis and, building on existing arrangements, will establish an appropriate stakeholder forum to provide for a clear and transparent engagement process for formal dialogue between the relevant stakeholders in relation to road openings.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action (DTTAS).

Update (In Progress)

Following extensive consultation with stakeholders (including utilities and telecommunication companies) over the last three years, the latest version of the *Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads* (Purple Book) was published in April 2017. Training to support the implementation of the latest version of the Purple Book is now being rolled out (Action 23 refers).

Preparations for the establishment of a Stakeholder (User) Forum are progressing. Terms of Reference have been drafted by the Monitoring Committee for consideration by the User Forum at its first meeting on 14 November 2017. This Forum will seek to address ongoing operational issues that arise relating to the Purple Book, the MapRoad Road Licensing System and the Green Book together with any subsequent associated guidelines.

Next Steps: First Stakeholder (User) Forum meeting scheduled to take place 14 November 2017.

Action 33: ComReg will engage with a suitable third party to produce a publication that sets out a five year forecast of data traffic that is reviewed, updated at regular intervals and made available on ComReg’s website. Examples of forecast items include: 1. Mobile data volumes/speeds, 2. Fixed broadband connections/speeds.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (ComReg/telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

ComReg is commencing work in relation to this action. On a quarterly basis, comprehensive data is provided to ComReg by operators on a range of fixed and mobile data traffic usage, including:

- Data from mobile operators on total traffic for 3G and 4G subscriptions.
- Data from fixed operators on traffic type by technology including ADSL, Fibre to the Cabinet, Fibre to the home/premises, fixed wireless access, cable and satellite.

Comprehensive historical data is also available that will provide a solid platform for the development of future data trend predictions.

Operators have indicated that they are ready to engage with ComReg on this matter. The Rural ISP association has indicated that they will co-ordinate responses from their membership to ensure that there is accurate representation of their customers and communities.

Next Steps: Work will continue on producing a publication that sets out a five year forecast of data traffic with a view to publishing the forecast in line with the headline action.

Action 34: Adequate funding will be made available to support the commitment in the Programme for a Partnership Government to accelerate the rollout of infrastructure including funding to local authorities to assign officers with responsibility for broadband.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (DRCD).

Update (In Progress)

DRCD has provided financial support to all 31 local authorities to co-fund the employment of a Broadband Officer in their area. The role of the Broadband Officer is to act as the dedicated local point of contact with responsibility for promoting telecommunications infrastructure development and as the liaison with telecoms operators on coverage and rollout issues.

DRCD has also engaged external consultants to work with all 31 local authorities to provide support for the development of a local digital strategy for their area, in order to ensure that local authorities are primed to take advantage of high-speed broadband coverage over the coming years.

Next Steps: DRCD continues to engage with local authorities through the Regional Action Groups and on a bilateral basis. DRCD is also supporting all local authorities on the development of a local digital strategy for their locality.

Action 35: Mobile and fixed network operators will be more proactive in social inclusiveness and in meeting the specific needs of more vulnerable groups.

Measure – Ongoing: As per headline action. (Telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

The following activities have been undertaken by the telecommunication companies over the last quarter:

Virgin Media

- **Future Makers:** For the past 3 years Virgin Media has sponsored the Future Makers Awards which recognize young people who use their coding superpowers to bring about social change. The 14 – 17 years category was won by Eye Opener, a device that prevents drivers from falling asleep at the wheel by warning them when their core body temperature drops.
- **Coderdojo:** Virgin Media has been in partnership with Coderdojo since 2014. As of today, Coderdojo classes are held in 3 Deis Schools and 1 National Primary School across the Dublin area.
- **VOOM Community:** In 2017, Virgin Media launched Voom Pitch which is Ireland’s biggest, most valuable pitching competition for start-ups. This gives start-ups the opportunity to pitch to Richard Branson for investment funding and win a share of €1.2million in prizes. Earlier this year, Coroflo, a digital start-up, that developed a revolutionary breastfeeding assistance monitoring system and app, was crowned the winner of the Voom Pitch competition.
- **Empowering Our People:** “In Givers” is a matched fundraising program that matches monies that employees fundraise for charity. Employees can apply for up to a maximum of €1,000 for their charities, per employee, per year.
- **Responsible Connectivity:** Virgin Media has developed a range of information toolkits for customers including:
 - **Parental Controls:** a service that restricts access to websites that contain age inappropriate content while connected to your home broadband.
 - **Online safety toolkits:** designed to target specific age groups and are compiled by world experts – for example, *Play and Learn: Being Online:* for children aged 4-8 years and available in 16 languages; *Family eSafety Kit:* for children aged 6-12 years and available in 18 languages; *The Web We Want:* for young people aged 13-16 years.
 - **Partnership with the National Parent’s Council:** designed to support parents worried about Internet safety through training programmes online.

Vodafone

- Vodafone is continuing its community outreach programme including national smartphone clinics for the elderly. This is just one element of their community engagement and broader Corporate Responsibility agenda.
- In partnership with SIRO, Vodafone has also launched a regional development project to provide free 1GB broadband for 2 years for gigabit hubs across 15 Irish towns.

Next Steps: Mobile network operators will continue to participate in social inclusiveness initiatives and programmes to meet the specific needs of vulnerable groups.

Action 37: ComReg will develop a licensing scheme allowing the use of mobile phone repeaters to help address the issue of indoor coverage, particularly in rural areas.

Measure – Commence Q2 2017: As per headline action. (ComReg).

Update (In Progress)

Indoor coverage is regularly raised as an issue impacting many rural households. However, there is a relative dearth of research and solutions. As a result, ComReg has taken the decision to conduct extensive research into commonly used building materials for domestic dwellings. It is strongly suspected that the levels of insulation currently used in houses is a significant impediment to indoor coverage; as heat and radio signals are part of the same electromagnetic spectrum (keeping heat in by default keeps radio signals out). ComReg has identified two potential solutions; native Wi-Fi calling and the use of high standard repeaters. Native Wi-Fi calling is for the Mobile Network Operators to implement (some operators have already introduced this service to their customers and others are currently looking at it). To facilitate the use of repeaters by the general public, ComReg is conducting background research on the feasibility of the introduction of mobile phone repeaters that are beyond network control. In parallel, work is also ongoing on the preparation of project and consultation documents.

Next Steps: ComReg will complete the feasibility research and publish a consultation document in Q4 2017 with Final Decision expected in Q2 2018.

Action 38: Wireless and fixed network operators will report quarterly to the Taskforce Implementation Group on activities undertaken to optimise the performance of their networks.

Measure - Ongoing: As per headline action. (Telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

The establishment of regular information sharing mechanisms to improve the flow of information from telecoms operators to local authorities in relation to updated location specific information on coverage and network improvements is crucial to bringing about tangible results in identifying solutions to issues impacting on mobile phone and broadband. A mechanism to provide regular updates from operators to assist the work of the Broadband Officers is being explored by DRCD and DCCA.E.

Next Steps: Operators will continue to provide updates to the Taskforce Implementation Group on activities undertaken to optimise the performance of their networks.

Action 39: All operators will introduce WiFi calling, VoLTE and other network feature and functionality enhancements at the earliest juncture and report on progress to the Taskforce Implementation Group.

Measure - Ongoing: As per headline action. (Telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

The following updates have been provided by telecommunication companies:

Virgin Media

- Virgin Media has advised that WiFi calling and VoLTE are on their technology roadmap and will be introduced to the market.
- Virgin Media last year launched Project Lightning, which is a digital infrastructure investment programme that will extend the reach of their cable footprint from 49% today to 60% of all Irish homes by 2020. To date the network has been extended to reach Ballina, Drogheda, Dundalk, Ennis, Enniscorthy, Gorey, Greystones, Kildare and Tullamore, Wexford, Castlebar, Arklow. Free wifi has been installed in a number of these towns so the local community get to experience lightning speeds for free.

eir

- eir launched WiFi calling in early 2017 and since its launch, eir have extended its range of supported products. There has been positive feedback from customers and eir have plans to continue to extend its device capability range over the coming months.

Next Steps: Telecoms operators will continue to report to the Taskforce Implementation Group on an ongoing basis in relation to network features and functionality enhancements.

Action 40: A review will be undertaken to address the issue of blackspots to include recommendations on initiatives to address the issue, taking account of the various innovative options available.

Q2 Measure: As per headline action. (DCCAIE).

Update (In Progress)

There has been engagement with mobile network operators and they provided detailed mobile phone coverage maps. In addition to the work done in relation to blackspots for Action 17, the two Departments are working with mobile network operators on assessing further work which can be done to address blackspots. DCCAIE has set about establishing a focus group to examine the issue of coverage and coverage expectations. It is hoped that the focus group will identify specific categories of locations where high quality mobile coverage should be available.

UPDATE ON QUARTER 2 MEASURES REPORTED AS DELAYED

Action 19: The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment will explore whether take up of the Metropolitan Area Networks can be improved including a review of the pricing and other arrangements relating to connections to the Metropolitan Area Networks.

Q2 Measure - As per headline action. (DCCAIE).

Update (Delayed)

The review of the pricing and other arrangements relating to access to the Metropolitan Area Networks is almost complete. The review has taken longer than expected because of the complexity of the MANs and their unique position as a wholesale open access fibre network in 94 regional towns and cities. Following finalisation of the review, DCCAIE will engage in discussions with enet, which manages and operates the MANs on behalf of the State, on potential recommendations arising from the review. It is hoped that the outcome of this process will facilitate improved access to the MANs for retail service providers.

Next Steps: Completion of pricing and access review by end Q4 2017

Action 22: The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System will be utilised by all local authorities and road opening licencing applicants as the single national centralised road opening licensing system.

Q2 Measure - As per headline action. (DTTAS/local authorities/telecommunications operators).

Update (In Progress)

The MapRoad Roadworks Licensing System (MRL) is currently being used by 27 local authorities. The Road Management Office continues to engage with the remaining 4 major urban local authorities towards migrating those local authorities to the MRL System. Three of those authorities are in the process of managing some road opening licence applications through the MRL System with a view to migrating fully to it. The one remaining local authority is already engaging with the Road Management Office towards progressing its migration to the system.

The CCMA have developed a National Charging Framework. Administrative/legal details on the how the National Deposit Scheme will work are been developed. The expectation is to implement the Framework in Q1 2018.

Next Steps: The Road Management Office will continue engagement with a view to fully migrating the remaining local authorities to the MRL System on a phased basis by Q2, 2018.

The CCMA will implement the National Charging Framework by Q1 2018.

Action 23: A training and communications programme will be developed and rolled out to local authorities and telecommunications operators to support the implementation of the Purple Book

Q2 Measure – as per headline action. (DTTAS/local authorities).

Update (In Progress)

Six regional seminars for approximately 300 local authority staff were rolled out in May/June 2017. One further seminar/workshop for local authority staff was held on 27th October 2017 and it is planned to hold a seminar/workshop for telecommunication companies in November 2017. A briefing session for Local Authority Broadband Officers will be organised towards the end November and thereafter it is intended to progress seminar/workshops for utilities.

Next Steps: DTTAS to organise appropriate training supports for utilities and telecommunication companies to include information relating to the Purple Book and the Green Book.

Action 26: Transport Infrastructure Ireland will work to complete the duct installation on 95km of roadway on the M7/M8 corridor between Dublin and Cork.

Q2 Measure - As per headline action. (TII).

Update (In Progress)

Works have been completed on the installation of ducting on two sections totalling approximately 80km on the route. Works have been completed on the M8 between Cork and the junction with the M7. Works are ongoing on the northbound carriageway of the M7 between Kildare Town and Newbridge. Some delay can be anticipated along the Kildare Town bypass section due to the presence of a tanking membrane beneath the motorway, which will necessitate ducting being installed along the fence line. In addition to the M7 & M8 works, TII has completed ducting work on 14km of the N25 in Cork between Little Island and Middleton which proved slower than on the M7/M8 corridor because of higher traffic volumes, the necessity for night time works and the restricted verge widths.

Next Steps: Subject to approval and availability of additional funding, in 2019 TII will undertake limited additional ducting works on the M6, M9 and N40, so as to eliminate existing short un-ducted sections.

UPDATE ON QUARTER 1 MEASURES REPORTED AS DELAYED

Action 8: All remaining local authorities to be fully compliant with the Development Contributions Guidelines for planning authorities, issued by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in January 2013.

Q1 Measure: As per headline action. (Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)/local authorities).

Update (In Progress)

28 of the 31 local authorities are now effectively in compliance with the 2013 guidelines, which exempt broadband infrastructure (masts and antennae) from development contributions. Of the remaining three, two schemes will be reviewed before end 2017, and under one scheme, contributions are waived/not charged in practice. DHPLG is following up on these and the remaining scheme with the relevant local authorities.

Next Steps: DHPLG will continue to engage with relevant Councils and monitor the reviews of schemes in this context, recognising the role of the elected members in this matter.

Action 9: Revised Exempted Development Regulations will immediately be brought forward to the Oireachtas.

Q1 Measure: As per headline action. (DHPLG).

Update (In Progress)

There is a broad range of exempted development provisions in the planning regulations relating to telecommunications infrastructure. This ensures that telecommunications infrastructure can be deployed rapidly in order to meet emerging demands. DHPLG has had extensive engagement with DCCAIE regarding proposed amendments to these existing exemptions to reflect advancements in new technology and to facilitate increased capacity on existing structures. While other priority legislative commitments in DHPLG delayed the finalisation of the proposed regulatory amendments, it is expected that this work now at an advanced stage, and as discussed at the National Stakeholder Forum, will be completed, in conjunction with DCCAIE, as soon as possible.

Next Steps: As required under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, it is intended to present draft exempted development regulations to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing,

Planning, Community and Local Government as soon as possible in the Autumn session for consideration and subsequent approval by both Houses of the Oireachtas. Once Oireachtas approval is secured, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government will sign the regulations to bring them into immediate force.

Action 30: In line with provisions in respect of contracts and transparency under the existing Universal Services Regulations, a breakdown of contract costs including monthly handset and services costs will be made available to consumers.

Q1 Measure: As per headline action. (ComReg/telecommunications operators).

Update (ComReg actions complete – awaiting MNOs publication of FAQs on handsets)

ComReg updated its public Annual Action Plan with a related action in Q1 2017 to “Engage with telecommunications operators regarding awareness of end-user contract costs”. In this respect, ComReg has now completed collecting relevant information from mobile service providers and has issued a request to industry to publish FAQs in respect to cost recovery for specific instances, and also in relation to unlocking handsets.

ComReg’s new price comparison tool www.comreg.ie/compare is now live. The tool offers increased functionality to consumers including the ability to view packages by total cost or average monthly cost, handset costs are also listed and there is a mobile phone application (App) to calculate usage on your Android smartphone and/or the facility to upload a bill allowing consumers make more informed decisions.

Next Steps: ComReg will provide a link from it’s website to FAQs for all operators when available from Operators.

Action 31: Both Service Providers and ComReg will make their complaints procedures readily available to consumers on all issues relating to mobile phone and broadband Services.

Q1 Measure: As per headline action. (ComReg/telecommunication operators).

Update (Complete)

ComReg published a Response to Consultation and Decision on 30 June 2017 that outlines specific provisions in respect to the codes of practice for complaint handling which all Service Providers are obliged to offer and has completed its online campaign to create awareness of the new obligations

on the Service Providers from January 2018.

Next Steps: ComReg to present to Broadband Officers details of the obligations placed on Service Providers by ComReg's Decision in addition to the complaints handling service that ComReg's Consumer Line offers.

GLOSSARY

ComReg	Commission for Communications Regulation
DCCA	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DTTAS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Intervention Area	The area of the country which will require State intervention to bring about the deployment of high speed broadband services.
LA	Local Authority
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
Mbps	Megabits per second
MRL	MapRoad Roadworks Licensing
NBP	National Broadband Plan
RMO	Road Management Office
TIF	Telecommunications and Internet Federation
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland