Agenda Item 11.1

December 2019

A public consultation has been launched by Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) ahead of undertaking a fresh procurement to find contractors to provide superfast broadband.

CDS, which is responsible for rolling out publicly-funded broadband across the two counties, is establishing the remaining area where there are no current or credible future plans to deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 30Mbps.

Nearly one million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset now have access to superfast broadband thanks to the Government supported CDS programme and stimulation of the commercial market which is an important element of CDS's role. Of these, over 300,000 homes and businesses have access to superfast broadband as a direct result of investment by CDS. A link to the CDS news release is attached which provides more information and links to the consultation webpage.

https://www.devonnewscentre.info/superfast-broadband-public-consultation-launched/

Consultation responses need to be submitted by Tuesday 10 December to enquiries@connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk. or in writing to OMR consultation, Economy Team, AB2 Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QD.

Devon Libraries - Exeter bas been given the UNESCO City of Literature status which was in no small part due to the role of libraries in the lives and cultural landscape across Devon. Nationally and internationally visits to libraries and the issuing of books has been in decline. In Devon however we are bucking that trend with a 4% increase in lending.

The Summer Reading Challenge – Space Race, has had a significant impact on that, seeing a 14% increase in participation from last year!

In Devon Libraries...

• 12,703 children took part in the Challenge (11,162 in 2018)
• 7,811 children completed the Challenge (6,661 in 2018)
• 268,677 library items were borrowed by children during July, August and September

Key Facts
• Participation is up by **14%** (our target was 5%)
• Completion rate is **61.5%** (our target was 60%)
• **44%** of participants were boys
• 1,366 children became new library members in order to take part
• Devon Libraries hosted **405** events attended by **9,563** children
• 169 young volunteers helped to deliver the Challenge across 41 libraries
• Young volunteers gave **1861** volunteer hours over the summer
• Library staff visited **197** primary schools to promote the Challenge (160 last year)
• The Summer Reading Challenge resources used in Devon cost £10,390 which equates to **£0.83** per participating child

Devon Climate Emergency
Devon County Council are working with partners across the County in developing a Carbon Reduction plan within six months to meet or exceed the United Nations IPCC targets. All local authorities within Devon have declared a Climate Emergency.

I would like to wish all readers a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Prosperous and Healthy 2020.