

# THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Resources Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

## Digital TV Switchover

### Report by Assistant Chief Executive

#### **Summary**

Starting in 2007 and ending in 2012, television services in the UK will go completely digital, TV region by TV region. This report outlines the implications for the Council of the Highland switchover in 2010 and 2011.

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Following digital TV switchover areas will have the same coverage as analogue TV but the signal will improve 10 – 20 fold. The analogue service will be switched off completely. Local residents need to be aware that where analogue TV reception was poor or non-existent, this may continue to be the case for digital TV. Free to air satellite is available (although the purchase of a dish will be required). Where communities have had poor analogue terrestrial TV reception they have been able to set up their own Community Television Relay Service to relay the analogue signals for BBC1, BBC2, ITV1, Channels 4 and 5 from a transmitter in the terrestrial TV transmission network. These are community owned and Ofcom has written to all known relay licensees to advise them of the potential requirements that will result from the switch to digital TV.
- 1.2 The first switchover to digital TV took place in Copeland, Whitehaven in October 2007, followed by the Borders in 2008. The Highland switchover will not take place until 2010, but a leaflet was delivered to every household in the area on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2007. In the run up to switch off analogue viewers will see information captions on their screen and then BBC2 is switched off up to one month before the other channels to encourage people to become prepared. The timescales for 2010 Switchover are as follows:
  - Notification of which quarter in 2010 – around 18 months prior to switchover
  - Notification of exact dates for switchover for each transmitter – 8 - 12 months prior to switchover
  - Some parts of Highland are covered by an Airdrie-based transmitter and will not switchover until 2011
- 1.3 A meeting was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2007 hosted by HIE with Peter Madry, Senior Associate Technical Adviser, Ofcom, Alan Stewart, Ofcom Scotland and Paul Hughes, National Manager Scotland, Digital UK to discuss the implications for the Highlands and Islands of digital switchover and how this will affect self help relays. A subsequent meeting was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2008 with Council Service representatives and John MacNeil, Assistant National Manager, Scotland, Digital UK to discuss general issues that will arise from the switchover.

#### **2. Implications for the Council**

- 2.1 Some key implications and required actions for the Council were identified including:
  - **All:** Ensuring that people are aware that Households who do not receive an

analogue signal will not necessarily receive digital TV but free to air satellite is available (although the purchase of a dish will be required) for areas that cannot receive a terrestrial TV signal;

- **Housing and Property, Education Culture and Sport and Social Work Services:** The issues relating to communal aerials will potentially relate to these services; many individual householders and those using communal TV aerials, for example, Housing Associations, schools and residential homes, may need to upgrade their equipment;
- **Transport Environment and Community Services:** Look at the implications for energy efficiency and waste disposal (however important to note that not all TVs need to be replaced but can be upgraded by a digi-box or satellite service); provision by trading standards of advice and assistance to consumers on issues such as rogue trading and mis-selling.
- **Planning and Development Services:** need to be aware of any planning issues that may arise;
- **Social Work:** in particular will need to be aware of and supporting the Help Scheme; in partnership with a voluntary sector representative group in each area, BBC is operating a Switchover Help Scheme;
- **Housing and Property Service:** Use of staff who do home visits to pass on messages/provide advice
- **Chief Executive's Service:** The use of the Highland Council website and Service Point Network to provide information to the public.

A detailed service action plan is at appendix I of this report.

2.2 Digital UK has offered to provide a full briefing to Members on the issues relating to switchover. This could be arranged to follow a Council meeting.

### 3. Resource Implications

3.1 There will be some costs associated with new communal aerials. These have yet to be quantified through an audit of existing equipment. These costs could be reduced by procuring across Services.

#### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

1. Note the implications for the Council arising from Digital TV Switch over
2. Agree to Digital UK delivering a briefing to Members

Signature

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive

Date

**Draft Digital Switchover Action Plan**

Timescales for 2010 Switchover:

Notification of which quarter in 2010 – 18 months prior to switchover

Notification of dates for switchover for each transmitter – 12 months prior to switchover

Some parts of Highland are covered by an Airdrie transmitter and will not switchover until 2011

<b>Service</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>H &amp; P</b>	Communal Aerials	Audit existing provision	Housing Policy Officer	31/03/09
		Procurement of new equipment where necessary (jointly with ECS and SW)	Housing Policy Officer	To be agreed
	Use of staff who do home visits to pass on messages/provide advice	All staff to be briefed through team briefing system so that they can give basic information to tenants	Housing Policy Officer	By 30/06/09
	Provide named Housing Contact for Digital UK	Identify key Housing contact	Housing Policy Officer	Complete
	Service specific Digital UK briefing	To Housing and Property Management Team	Housing Policy Officer	By 30/06/09
	Charge to tenants for the service	Under consideration by Housing and Property Management Team	Housing Policy Officer	31/03/09
	Charging owner occupiers for installation of new aerials and ongoing maintenance.	Under consideration by Housing and Property Management Team	Housing Policy Officer	31/03/09
<b>SW</b>	Communal Aerials	Audit of existing provision	Team Leader	31/03/09
		Procurement of new equipment where necessary (jointly with ECS and H & P)	Team Leader	To be agreed

	All care home residents are to get help with the switch to digital TV following changes to the Switchover Help Scheme. Dept for Culture Media and Sport is working with the Scottish Government and has begun a procurement process to select an organisation to collect personal data from all UK care homes for use in future switchovers.	Clarify what help that is available to care home residents, ensure appropriate data is made available and that care home residents do access help to switchover.	Team Leader	31/03/09
	Help Scheme	Ensure that information is made available to vulnerable adults	Team Leader	To be agreed
	Use of staff who do home visits to pass on messages/provide advice	Identify key staff	Team Leader	By 30/06/09
		Awareness raising session for key staff – possible use of Digital UK personnel	Team Leader	By 30/06/09
	use of lunch clubs/day centres to spread the word/assist clients		Team Leader	By 30/06/09
	Service specific Digital UK briefing	All staff to be briefed through team briefing system so that they can give basic information to service users	Team Leader	By 30/06/09
<b>TECS</b>	Trading Standards – rogue trading and mis-selling	Raise public awareness of possibility of rogue trading and mis-selling by means of news releases and partnership working with other services having contact with the public. Investigate complaints.	Principal Trading Standards Officer (Operations)	From start of changeover publicity
	Waste Disposal – potential for increased fly tipping and increased	Increase the number of household recycling centre facilities for TVs from 8 to 18 throughout Highland in	Head of Waste Management	Bulky Service

	legitimate disposal of old equipment	<p>current year.</p> <p>The costs of collection and recycling to be externally funded by industry through Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) legislation.</p> <p>Undertake a press campaign to encourage Householders to use available recycling facilities. Bulky collection service will also remain an option for householders.</p>		<p>already in place.</p> <p>Increase in WEEE recycling facilities by 31/03/08.</p>
	Self Help Relays	Actions to be identified where appropriate	Director TECS	As required
<b>P &amp; D</b>	Planning issues	Pragmatic and flexible approach: A great number of dishes will require planning permission the Council is not resourced to chase. In a great number of cases this will not be an issue so a reactive approach to unauthorised dishes in Conservation Areas and on listed buildings may be appropriate.	Head of Planning and Building Standards	N/A
<b>ECS</b>	Communal Aerials in schools (and any other relevant buildings)	Audit existing provision	Estate Strategy Manager	31/03/09
		Procurement of new equipment where necessary (jointly with SW and H & P)	Estate Strategy Manager	To be agreed
	Service specific Digital UK briefing		Estate Strategy Manager	By 30/06/09
<b>CEXO</b>	Provide central point of contact for Digital UK	Central point of contact identified	Policy Manager	Complete
	Arrange Member presentation By Digital UK	Arrange presentation to follow an appropriate committee	Policy Manager	By 30/06/09

	Report to Resources Committee		Policy Manager	03/12/08
	Highland area split between 2 transmitters and switchover dates	Link to Digital UK Post Code Checker on Highland Life Website	Policy Manager	Complete
	Service Point Network and Ward Managers as information points	Service points and service centre will respond to simple enquiries and act as a sign posting service for Digital UK. Will prepare to deliver and discuss training with DUK closer to switch over.  Ward Managers to attend briefing by Digital UK to enable them to field enquiries.	Customer Services Manager  Corporate Managers	By 30/06/09  By 30/06/09
	Website	Information on Highland Life Website with link to Digital UK post code checker	Public Relations Manager	Complete
<b>Finance</b>	Procurement and funding issues re purchase of communal aerials			Input as required
<b>All</b>	Ensure that the public are provided with information relating to digital switchover particularly vulnerable groups and individuals			