Wording from PCnllr Simon Luck's email issued to PCnllrs on 7th August 2021:-

"Dear all,

I'd like to raise the subject of Fibre to the Premises at our next Parish meeting, to highlight the issues we face as a small village for investment in core infrastructure.

What is FTTP? Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) brings fibre cables directly into the home, bringing ultra-fast broadband speed as well as facilitating stable connectivity for lots of devices who are all vying for their share of bandwidth. FTTP typically delivers speeds of 100mb/s – 1gb/s.

I thought we already had broadband? FTTP differs to our current broadband – at the moment we have Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC), a green cabinet which you'll see at West End Lane. Fibre terminates at this cabinet and then existing copper cables carry the signals for the last portion of their journey. This is slow as we're talking about decades old infrastructure, and the further away you are from the cabinet, the slower your broadband. FTTC typically delivers speeds of 2mb/s – 30mb/s.

Why does Donhead need FTTP? People and businesses have been changing the way they operate for many years, long before COVID hit, consuming far more services digitally and connecting a greater number of devices to the internet than ever before. Our TV is now delivered via the internet, we game over the internet and we communicate with family and friends over the internet with video and sharing of photos. This type of rich content requires big bandwidth so we were already struggling many years ago. Then COVID hit and that exacerbated the problem further. We all had to work from home, we relied on Zoom or Teams to communicate with work, friends, health professionals and educators. Our spending shifted to online shopping for food, essentials and other needs through the likes of Amazon, and our entertainment demands were satisfied through Netflix and other on demand services (you should watch Clarkson's Farm if you get a chance on Amazon Prime!).

Last year, during the first lockdown, communications companies like Vodaphone were reporting an increase in internet usage by 70% - all using existing technology and infrastructure.

COVID will have a lasting impact to the rural community with professionals and families moving further away from cities out into the country to find space and a better quality of life now that flexible working is the norm. These home working professionals, young families, small businesses and all our village inhabitants desperately need fast broadband – it's become a norm to expect this now wherever we are in the UK. New homeowners look at broadband speed as a deciding factor as to where to move and if we want to have a sustainable village, we must provide this core infrastructure to every home.

So how can we get FTTP? You may remember that I submitted a Community Partnership request to Openreach and last February received the quote (attached) to bring FTTP to 244 homes at a cost of £294k. We'd need to sign up 196 homes to cover this cost using the Government's £1,500 voucher scheme. This made me

think that Openreach wasn't serious about supporting the rural community and we'd quickly become second-class citizens when it came to connectivity in this information age.

It seems that [Wessex Internet](#) has secured Government funding/approval to deliver FTTP in this area and have a different model of delivery to the likes of Openreach. They are looking to sign up an initial 43 households in the village in order to start building out the infrastructure and deliver ultra-fast broadband to our homes. They rely on local landowners to provide access and lay cables and each homeowner that signs up should be aware that cables are likely to run through their garden/land to the adjoining property that signs up rather than any existing road ducting network.

Wessex Internet have a £49 connection charge and then packages between £29 per month up to £84 per month to deliver from 100mb/s up to 900mb/s respectively. This seems comparable to other telecoms providers which makes me suspect there is a subsidy from the Government (and homeowners provide their £1,500 Government Voucher when they sign up).

What am I asking? As a Parish Council, there is no requirement for investment – this is a choice for every village inhabitant and of course, not all our villagers require this capability now but we need to consider their future needs and the needs of future generations who will live here. I'd just like to capture this topic in our agenda, to discuss the current state and where we think as a village we need to get to, and then distribute those minutes so all our parishioners are aware of their choice to acquire ultra-fast broadband. We can disseminate this information through the Donhead Digest as well as through the Neighbourhood app and, of course, word of mouth. Ideally, I'd like to encourage more members of our village to attend the meeting and give us their views directly.

Please do use this thread to feedback any of your comments/suggestions/concerns before our next meeting so we can have an informed discussion. Nick Martin from Wood Cottage has been very kindly supporting this movement and I'm sure would value some time at the next meeting to make the case for ultra-fast broadband in Donhead St. Andrew.

Many thanks for your time,

Simon"