

## **COLESHILL PARISH COUNCIL**

Chairman: Dick Ware.  
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Ian Livingston Esq  
Chief Executive  
BT Group  
81 Newgate Street  
London  
EC1A 7AJ

5 November 2012

Dear Mr Livingston

As Chairman of Coleshill Parish Council, I am writing to draw your attention to what seems to residents of the village a long catalogue of half-truths and misleading statements by BT about the provision of fibre-based broadband to Coleshill.

I would ask you to read what follows yourself rather than allowing it to be filtered out by others in your office. One of our residents has recently engaged in a long and ultimately fruitless conversation with people claiming to speak for you (the e-mail traffic is available on our village website <http://www.coleshill.org/> and a summary of his experience is set out in an Annex to this letter). If the position is indeed that BT is at present unwilling to do anything further for us, we would at least welcome confirmation from your own lips that what has been said to that effect on your behalf is correct.

To start with, Coleshill is not Ultima Thule. We are a village located a few miles outside the M25, three miles from the M40 and between the towns of Amersham and Beaconsfield. Each of these towns has fibre broadband, while we suffer from extremely slow non-fibre speeds via BT copper. Coleshill is served by the Amersham exchange and had a fibre-enabled cabinet installed a year ago now, which seemed at the time to presage the imminent arrival of an enhanced service.

In fact, your advertising had promised imminent connection for Coleshill residents as long ago as 2010. However, the target date has slipped on a regular basis every quarter for two years now and we no longer have any confidence in it. The promises tantalizingly put before us, moreover, seem dangerously close to the kind of advertising which deliberately seeks to entice customers to sign up for a service which is endlessly promised but which is never intended to be delivered.

We have asked your people for an indication of the costs involved in completing the work necessary to connect the cabinet you installed last year to the exchange. We were told that the cost was excessive but were refused a figure, even though it must exist in order for you to have deemed it so.

Your other argument has been that the customer base in Coleshill necessary for you to regard us as a good commercial proposition is not large enough. You may be interested to know that the Parish Council is now actively encouraging villagers to register with you and, from a position of minimal interest a fortnight ago, some sixty villagers are now registered.

I am copying this letter to our local Councillors, at both District and County level, and to our MP, as it seems to us insupportable that small communities like ours, so near and yet electronically so far from the mainstream, have to suffer from lack of what has become an essential aid to both personal and business life. Ringing Government support for ensuring UK-wide fast broadband in order to boost economic growth is of little use if the main provider of such services, yourselves, cannot supply the basic infrastructure. There are a number of small businesses in Coleshill whose growth ambitions are currently thwarted by your inaction.

I look forward to your reply. Coleshill would above all like to hear from your own mouth that BT will do what is necessary to ensure that Coleshill will be linked to the superfast highway in the very near future.

Yours sincerely

Dick Ware  
Chairman, Coleshill Parish Council

Copies Councillor David Schofield. Buckinghamshire County Council  
Councillor AS Hardie. Chiltern District Council  
Councillor GK Harris. Chiltern District Council  
Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan MP. House of Commons. London. SW1A 0AA

## **ANNEX**

### **Summary of E-Mail correspondence between Peter Clackett (PC) and BT.**

*25 September 2012 PC to Ian Livingston*

*rehearses history, from first expression of interest in Infinity.  
First interest 10/10. Told would be available 03/11  
In March, 03/11 became 06/11  
In June, 06/11 became 09/11  
In September, 09/11 became 12/11  
In December, 12/11 became 03/12  
In March, 03/12 became 06/12  
In June, 06/12 briefly became 07/12 and then 09/12  
Today, depending on which BT site is accessed, it is either said to be unavailable;  
you are working on it; or it's coming in June 2013*

*25 September Tracy Stobbs to PC*

*Ian Livingston "has very limited access to his e-mail" so she is replying  
Passed to "senior service team" for response*

*27 September Julie Howarth (Executive Level Complaints) to PC*

*Sorry about concerns.  
Has asked New Generation team about Infinity in Coleshill*

*2 October Julie Howarth to PC*

*New Generation have reported that "deployment" of cabinets based on  
commercial criteria. Enablement of cabinet 3 suspended as costs make it commercially  
unviable*

*2 October PC to Julie Howarth*

*Asks for basis of judgment of commercial non-viability  
Constantly deferred date has deterred villagers' registration*

*2 October Julie Howarth to PC*

*Dates given in the past have only been estimates  
Sometimes "this date moves for reasons beyond our control"  
Commercial decision "may be" related to costs*

*3 October PC to Julie Howarth*

*Can Next Generation please provide a more complete explanation*

*4 October Julie Howarth to PC*

*The response verges on gibberish but appears to say that the cost of supplying  
mains electricity is the problem. Actual costs involved cannot be revealed*

*4 October PC to Julie Howarth*

*Notes that excuse seems to have changed from commercial non-viability to power supply. Cannot understand this, as mains supply only 20/25 metres away*

*5 October Julie Howarth to PC*

*Simply repeats wording from earlier messages but adds that now “both economically and commercially” unviable. Cannot comment on mains supply. This is BT’s final position*

*5 October PC to Ian Livingston*

*Would like IL’s views before proceeding further*

*6 October Ian Livingston to PC*

*“I am at a loss of the further comments you are seeking from me. It is your decision where to go next as you describe it” (sic)*