

Preston City Council decided the best way to work with Digital UK and to ensure that council resources were mobilised and services prepared for digital switchover was to nominate two senior officers to lead on the work.

They liaised with Digital UK's Granada Regional Manager, Jo Waters, to make sure she had direct access to the people and facilities within the council who could help and that the council's website was a good source of information on switchover.

Mick Lovatt, Preston's Director of Environment, kept partners informed about progress and what the implications of switchover were for them and the people of Preston – including the need to protect consumers from rogue traders and the importance of ensuring that vulnerable groups in the community got the support and financial help available to them.

The council's contact centre staff were trained so that they were ready to deal with queries from the public about switchover. The council also used its contacts with the area's registered social landlords and its own outreach workers to help make sure accurate messages got through to the people who need to know. Through an initiative called Help Direct, set up in conjunction with Lancashire County Council, Preston and South Ribble Age Concern worked with the older and more vulnerable residents. Mick Lovatt also worked to make sure that old analogue equipment was properly disposed of.

Mick Lovatt says:

“Having lead officers for switchover really helps with coordinating work and messages across services.”