Belfast
creative

Submission for Urban Broadband Fund
February 2012

Belfast
Super-connected Cities Project

www.belfastcity.gov.uk

Belfast City Council – Super-Connected Cities

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SECTION A   SHORT-FORM BUSINESS CASE

A.1 Define the strategic objectives, measures of success and targets of the proposal with respect to:

A.1.1 Economic growth

The draft Programme for Government Economic Strategy identifies Belfast as the key driver for economic growth in the region. Economic growth in Belfast will be based on a sustainable and growing private sector, with a highly skilled and flexible workforce operating in productive and innovative firms that are competitive in global markets. The development of Belfast's economic infrastructure, including an excellent communications network infrastructure, will be essential to promoting growth and inward investment. The key economic growth objectives in the draft Programme for Government 2011–2015, which this Ultrafast Broadband Fund (UBF) application will support are:

- the promotion of over 25,000 new jobs
- the achievement of £300 million investment through foreign direct investment (FDI)
- £300 million investment by businesses in R&D, with at least 20% coming from SMEs.

It is estimated that at least 50% of all these objectives will be delivered in Belfast. To help achieve these objectives Belfast City Council has recently launched an Investment Programme 2012-15[1] which commits to investing:

- £150m in capital projects;
- £34m in local economic growth;
- £29m in neighbourhoods; and,
- Delivering £20m of cash savings.

This UBF application is being submitted in the context of this Investment Programme.

A.1.2 Take-up of broadband services

Belfast City Council (BCC) aims to ensure access to superfast broadband for every business and community by 2015 across the city, with those sectors that deploy large volumes of data, such as the creative industries, having access to ultrafast broadband. Ultrafast connectivity will also be provided to all of the Enterprise Zones included in our proposal, making them even more attractive to businesses.

Our targets are:

- to deliver 100% city-wide superfast broadband coverage by 2015
- to deliver 50% take-up of superfast broadband, with businesses and the public sector making the most of this opportunity by 2015
- to deliver 50% take-up of ultrafast broadband within targeted digital-led industry.

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[1] http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/investment/index.asp

A.1.3 Social objectives

Quality of life in Belfast is vital to the well-being of citizens and attracting visitors, investors and students as well as being the bedrock of economic growth. Our vision is to have a city in which all individuals have access to the Internet as well as the skills, resources and technical support to make that access meaningful and to allow them to actively participate in social, economic and political life.

Digital inclusion is fundamental if we are to maximise our potential for economic growth, prosperity and social cohesion. In Belfast this also means reducing segregation and promoting inclusion and integration of different communities. Many of our citizens continue to live parallel lives, with some communities still separated by physical barriers. This application therefore also focuses on addressing the diseconomies of segregation.

The social objectives of our proposal, which are congruent to the actions in our Good Relations Plan[2], and our Poverty and Social Inequalities Framework, are:

- to provide more direct and regular interaction opportunities between government and citizens through improved digital access to democratic processes
- to increase access to flexible working particularly for those employees with childcare or care-giving responsibilities, and facilitate working time adjustments for those attending education or training
- to double the volume of e-commerce in Belfast by 2015, in line with plan recently announced by the European Commission (EC).

These objectives will support delivery of the Big Society: connecting our communities and giving them real control over their futures, for example in developing community broadband hubs.

A.1.4 Other local objectives

Belfast has established itself as a leading short-break destination, and the Financial Times recently listed the city as one of the 'Top 10 places in the world' to hold a conference or major event. It has two modern airports within 20 minutes of the city centre, and the Port of Belfast handles 60% of Northern Ireland's seaborne trade. Belfast also has plans for a £100 million rapid transport infrastructure in the city. To augment these tourism and connectivity strengths, we have established the following objective:

- to significantly extend 3G/4G/Wi-Fi coverage to key locations such as the city centre, Port of Belfast, and conference/major event settings.

We also intend to support public service users. This element of the programme will focus on providing people with the confidence and skills to access the public services available online. We will deliver this element of the programme jointly with our wider public sector partners, with the key objective being:

- to transform the way public services are delivered through moving as many services online as possible, developing innovative methods of delivering services, equipping businesses and residents with the skills and motivation to utilise these services effectively.

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[2]   http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/goodrelations/docs/GoodRelationsPlan2011.pdf

A.2 Set out the rationale for public investment:

A.2.1 What are the specific needs you are addressing?

Northern Ireland has benefited from early deployment of FTTC and at the beginning of June 2011 81% of homes were connected to an exchange where FTTC has been deployed – compared to around 23% across the UK as a whole. BT, Virgin Media, Hibernia Atlantic and Atlas/Bytel all operate fibre networks.

Superfast broadband will be a vital part of Belfast's digital economy aspirations, enabling and sustaining dramatic improvements in connectivity and offering new possibilities for businesses, public services and local communities. To achieve our vision of enabling 100% delivery of superfast broadband city-wide by 2015, in step with the Government's desire to have the best superfast broadband network in Europe by 2015, we intend to use UBF funding to supplement the existing coverage to achieve city-wide superfast broadband coverage by 2015.

Establishing universal superfast coverage will not only have a significant impact on the city's economy – it will also provide the foundation for a scalable fibre access network which can be further developed to address Digital Agenda for Europe targets for 2020.

By targeting access to ultrafast broadband at those sectors that deploy large volumes of data, such as the creative industries, we aim to enable new ways of working that are currently impractical, facilitating new technologies, new products and new markets. Ultrafast broadband will also facilitate cloud-computing and software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications, once regarded as the preserve of large corporations, but now set to become standard rather than cutting edge for SMEs. The availability of ultrafast broadband will in addition enhance the capability of a number of exciting new projects in the city including the provision of an Innovation Centre at Springvale, the development of a green business park on the North Foreshore (the 'eco city'), and our joint project with Invest NI to develop a Digital Hub to promote digital technology based enterprises in the city. While our strategy is to target ultrafast coverage to key parts of the city, the fact that Belfast covers a relatively small geographic area means that, in reality, the ultrafast coverage will be largely contiguous in nature – this is illustrated in Annex 1.

Mobile broadband traffic has grown dramatically in the past few years, and the availability of high-speed wireless connectivity is needed to support a wide range of data services that are fast becoming essential features of our economy. Our plans for wireless infrastructure will mean businesses will be able to use wireless broadband to work more efficiently, local government workers will be able to stay in touch with their office via handheld devices, and the general public and visitors will have reliable and uncongested mobile access to the Internet. For too long, Northern Ireland and Belfast have suffered from limited 3G coverage – our plans to invest in wireless infrastructure will change this and our deployment strategy for the city centre, transport hubs, conference venues and other key locations will leverage the demand for services in these areas to best effect and will achieve economies of scale.

A.2.2 Have all options to meet these needs by the stimulation and encouragement of private sector investment been explored?

The basis of our approach has included the outputs of our consultation with local telecoms providers to ensure we have factored in the plans of all operators.

Maps (redacted at Annex 2) illustrate the extent of known and announced fibre-based telecommunications infrastructure within the city. Our analysis therefore represents the best available forecast of the maximum extent of fibre-based coverage without public sector intervention, and reflects our early market engagement.

We have also consulted with a number of operators to understand potential market plans to provide high-speed wireless connectivity within the city. Discussions are at an early stage and clarity around plans has yet to emerge, but there is a possibility that we could provide and/or re-use existing vertical infrastructure within the city centre. BCC is conscious of this possibility, and our proposed funding make-up and profile considers this outcome.

A.2.3 What resources and skills are you uniquely placed to contribute to the project?

At Belfast City Council we believe in strong, shared, collaborative leadership and are committed to bringing together partners from all sectors to develop innovative solutions to Belfast's challenges and to take advantage of all opportunities. This project has the support of all six political parties and will be delivered in the context of the Council's Investment Programme 2012-15. This means that it will be delivered through the Council's Property and Projects Department which has a dedicated team of programme and project managers, procurement specialists and project accountants. Support will also be provided by the Council's ICT Service and the Economic Development Unit. External delivery issues will be managed through the Belfast Delivery Forum which will include the key government departments such the Department for Regional Development (DRD), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), the Planning Service, Invest NI and the Department of Social Development.

Projects which the Council will deliver over the next three years which are closely related to the UBF project include:
- £4m Digital Hub
- £10m Girdwood Community Hub
- £8m Innovation Centre
- £8m Green Economy Business Park
- £20m extension to the Waterfront Hall.

Also, we work with around 1,500 local companies every year through a range of business support events, programmes and mentoring initiatives. This engagement will be critical in enhancing the take-up of the services once they are rolled-out.

A.3 Outline the information, education and demand-stimulation (consumers, business, public sector and third sector) activities to be undertaken

The desired outcomes will be achieved by motivating and equipping businesses and communities with the desire and right skills to fully adopt broadband and use ICT. Our strategy has a number of key elements; a significant targeted promotional campaign, a business support programme, a community support programme, and a skills development programme covering businesses and public service users. While our capital programme focuses on specific areas, our demand stimulation programme will be implemented city-wide, with a particular focus on the needs of businesses in digital-led industries.

There are four key elements to our demand stimulation programme for businesses. These elements will be aligned to and support the wider economic development activities being undertaken by BCC and other government agencies. A key area of alignment is to support ongoing digital business incubation programmes:

- interactive business events targeted at those sectors and areas which will benefit most from the availability of superfast and ultrafast broadband
- peer-to peer support using business associations and sector networks to provide credible and dependable support to SMEs
- skills development workshops to equip businesses with the skills to utilise the opportunities created by superfast broadband, and sign-posting to further training; this will include sessions targeted at key sectors
- a white-label promotional campaign across the whole city, tailored to specific sectors and audiences.

There are three elements to our demand stimulation programme for communities and residential users:

- community champions will be effective advocates giving trusted advice and acting as 'digital neighbours'
- a programme of support and expert advice to support those communities who wish to develop their own community broadband hubs, building on our positive relations and shared space initiatives
- a white-label promotional campaign across the whole area, tailored to key audiences – such as those considering starting a home or small business.

Our support for public service users will be aligned with our public sector partners to support the implementation of public sector transformation plans. This element of the programme will target those groups most affected by public sector transformation– for example, ensuring young people can access e-learning opportunities, or ensuring our older residents have the skills and confidence to fully utilise remote healthcare.

BCC will also help voluntary sector organisations ensure that their staff and, in many cases beneficiaries, have the skills and knowledge to benefit from a super-connected Belfast. Through meetings and workshops we will encourage their staff to follow us on our digital journey so that the third sector is in a position to understand and benefit from the potential of high-capacity digital infrastructure, both fixed and wireless.

A.4   What new infrastructure does your proposal require?

Our super-connected Belfast strategy will fuel creativity and enable innovation among businesses and individuals by providing ultra-high speed, pervasive, intelligent and trusted digital infrastructure that will support enterprise and talent. It will connect businesses, individuals and communities, giving them the ability to harness resources and capabilities across the city.
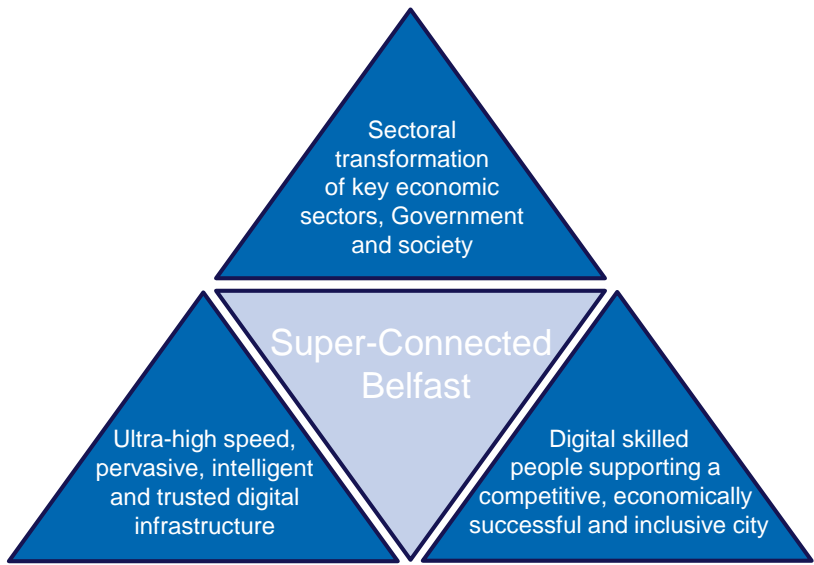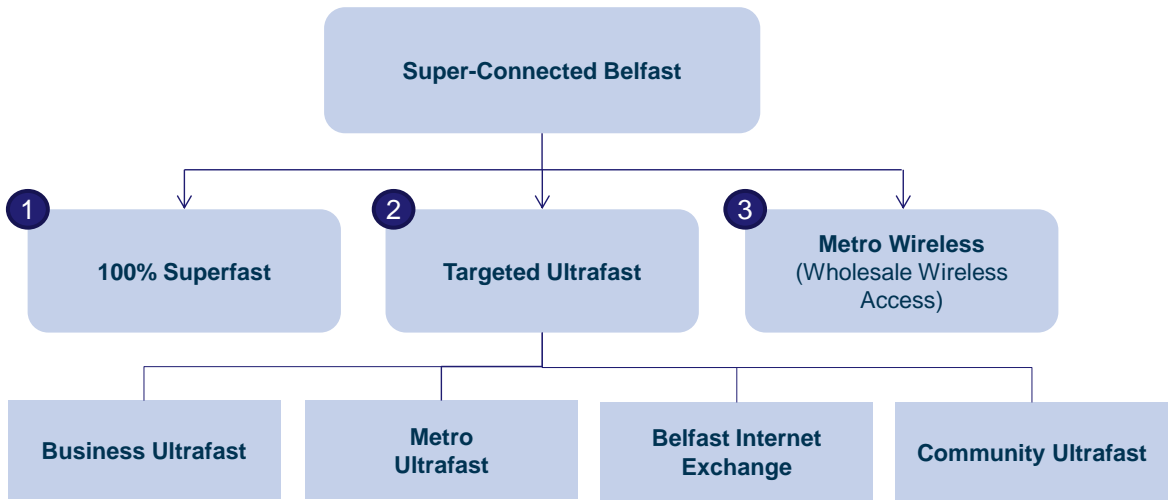

Figure A.1: Building blocks of super-connected Belfast

Our plan is comprised of three programmes aimed at developing city-wide ultrafast digital infrastructure, both wired and wireless, enabling Belfast to achieve the status of a world-class digital city.

Figure A.2: Three programmes of Super-Connected Belfast

- **Programme 1 – 100% Superfast:** universal superfast coverage that will not only have a significant impact on the city's economy, but will also provide the foundation for a scalable fibre access network that can be further developed to address the *Digital Agenda for Europe's* 2020 targets**.**

- **Programme 2 – Targeted Ultrafast:** targeting access to ultrafast broadband at those sectors that deploy large volumes of data, such as the creative industries. While our strategy is to target ultrafast coverage to key parts of the city, the fact that Belfast covers a relatively small geographic area means that, in reality, the ultrafast coverage will be largely contiguous in nature.

- **Programme 3 – Metro Wireless (Wholesale Wireless Access):** our plans to invest in wireless infrastructure within the city centre and at transport hubs, conference venues and other key locations will leverage the demand for services in these areas to best effect and achieve economies of scale. The access infrastructure provided, which in many places will build on existing vertical infrastructure owned by the Council or one of its partners, will be open access and will form a technology neutral network capable of supporting mobile broadband in the near term (Wi-Fi and 3G) as well as into the future (4G through LTE and the next generation of Wi-Fi). For this reason the Council's proposal is not defined as simply Metro Wi-Fi, but Metro Wireless.

New infrastructure required for 100% Superfast

At present, due to the deployment of next-generation broadband networks, much of Belfast City's residential areas have been superfast broadband-enabled. Through consultation with suppliers, we understand that superfast broadband coverage is approximately 80% to 84%. However, key zones of the city (including central business districts) amounting to approximately 24,000 premises (16% of the total) remain outside superfast broadband coverage, with no upgrade plans in development.

New infrastructure required for Targeted Ultrafast

Our Targeted Ultrafast programme contains four related strands, each of which we deal with separately:

- Business Ultrafast
- Metro Ultrafast
- Belfast Internet Exchange
- Community Ultrafast.

The Business Ultrafast strand will see broadband with speeds of up to 1Gbit/s delivered to digital-led bandwidth intensive businesses within Belfast. Across the city, we have identified clusters of businesses involved in the creative industries. We believe these businesses have a demand for such services, but have been unable to afford the high connection costs. As well as digital-led industries, we anticipate a broader demand among businesses for high-speed connections in the 100Mbit/s range. The Business Ultrafast strand will support connections to these networks also.

We have also identified six enterprise parks which will benefit from development of improved campus infrastructure. As part of the Business Ultrafast strand, dedicated fibre will be built to the gate of these enterprise parks and terminated in newly constructed telehouse facilities within the park. The telehouse will be open to all telecoms providers and will be managed by an independent third party or parties in line with

policies and rates agreed with the BCC. To ensure that the cost of connection to the telehouse will not be a barrier to take-up of ultrafast broadband (a particular concern for SMEs), we will also provide funding to lay ducting throughout the enterprise parks. Such campus infrastructure will ensure that connection to ultrafast dedicated fibre becomes fast and cost effective.

The Metro Ultrafast strand will see the construction of a metropolitan area network (MAN) around the outskirts of the city. This network of ducting and fibre-optic cable will be available to all telecommunication operators on an open access basis. Care will be taken not to duplicate existing infrastructure. The MAN in Belfast will be similar to those commissioned and deployed by the Irish Government in 93 towns in the Republic of Ireland[3].

The Belfast Internet Exchange strand will capitalise on the direct international connectivity offered by Project Kelvin[4] and encourage the development of a strategic internet exchange point in Belfast City. The exchange point will be a mutually owned neutral facility where operators of telecoms networks can interconnect with each other. The funding under this strand will be allocated to incentivise operators to connect to this exchange point via high capacity, resilient fibre routes. Exemplar projects in this regard include the Singapore Internet Exchange.[5]

Finally under this Programme, Community Ultrafast will deliver dedicated fibre connections to key community hubs owned by BCC. These hubs include health, community, leisure and development centres.

New infrastructure required for Metro Wireless

As mobile broadband usage rises, operators are struggling with the problem of how to handle the growth in traffic in a cost effective manner.[6] In city centres such as Belfast, mobile broadband networks are often overwhelmed and data traffic slows to a crawl. One method being embraced by mobile operators at present is Wi-Fi offload, where the user is automatically switched from the mobile network to a Wi-Fi network once they come within range. This enables higher speeds and better service for the end user while offering cost saving to the operator.

Our Metro Wireless programme is an innovative approach which will make available public infrastructure with which to offer a wholesale wireless access network. We anticipate coverage across an area of approximately 25 square kilometres around Belfast City Centre to be provided from a contiguous layer of hotzones. Each hotzone will include a number of wireless access points located on publicly-owned street furniture such as lamp posts and CCTV poles. Every hotzone will be connected back to the Metro Wireless operator's core network via fibre backhaul.

Fibre backhaul is a key component of the Metro Wireless programme. Although typical modern wireless access points (e.g. Wi-Fi) can offer a headline access speed of 300Mbit/s, they are in practice restrained by the backhaul bottleneck (connection to the internet) which is much lower, frequently in the range of 2–

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[3]   http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/NR/rdonlyres/2AAEE7C5-F8C9-45E2-960E-772DC62E60DC/0/ENET_BROCHURE_FINAL.pdf

[4]   http://www.detini.gov.uk/deti-telecoms-index/deti-telecoms-direct-international-connectivity.htm

[5]   http://www.ida.gov.sg/Infrastructure/20090708173942.aspx

[6]   http://www.analysysmason.com/About-Us/News/Press-releases1/Wi-Fi-offload-PR-Feb2012

24Mbit/s. Our Metro Wireless solution will free up the backhaul bottleneck and allow service providers to offer ultrafast broadband speeds.

In addition to a contiguous wireless zone around the city centre, the Metro Wireless solution will deliver wholesale wireless access to key public areas including universities and as well as BCC properties such as community and leisure centres.

A.5   Define the area(s) over which ultrafast or superfast broadband is to be delivered:

Maps illustrating current and planned infrastructure are set out in Annex 1. These maps were obtained through early engagement with the market and will be refined over the detailed planning stage of our project.

A.6   What funding from the Ultrafast Broadband Fund are you requesting?

BCC is requesting an allocation of £13.7 million from the UBF. Further details of our funding request are set out in SECTION G and Annex 5.

A.7   Briefly set out what additional funds will be contributed to the project

BCC is prepared to make funding available over the 2012–2015 timeframe to support implementation of the Super-connected Cities project. We propose to allocate £1 million per year or a total of £3 million in total.

BCC is pursuing nearly £40 million of funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in order to support development of economic infrastructure as set out in the City's Investment Programme 2012–2015 (See B.1). Although it is not intended that EU funds will be sought to directly support our Super-Connected Cities proposal, it is anticipated that synergies between the programmes will encourage take-up of superfast and ultrafast broadband.

The Council has also successfully bid for £10 million ERDF funding to develop a Community Hub in the North of the city. This will be one of the key community locations where access to ultrafast broadband will be made available. The Community Hub will provide a neutral space for cross-community engagement, using technologies as a means to overcome traditional barriers.

A.8   Any physical resources the city or its partners are contributing to the project

BCC will collaborate with the DRD and public sector bodies to ensure appropriate access to support the exploitation and reuse of premises and infrastructure (e.g. street furniture including lampposts). To this end, a letter of intent has been supplied by the DRD and is attached (See Annex 3).

For the North Foreshore zone, BCC will make available the land with all appropriate authorisations.

In the implementation of all programmes contained in our proposal, BCC will deploy architecture, project management, technology and administrative resources to support delivery.

SECTION B   DIGITAL-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH

B.1 What job creation initiatives and strategies for attracting new businesses into the city are in your proposal including, where relevant, linkage to the delivery of a successful Enterprise Zone?

Belfast is home to two-thirds of Northern Ireland's largest 50 companies and half of its foreign-owned businesses. It has 3 in 5 of Northern Ireland's computer and related service jobs and two-thirds of creative media and arts jobs. Northern Ireland is Europe's leading location for financial services software development, attracting more than a third of total projects in the last five years. The majority of these companies are based in Belfast.

It is therefore clear to see that digital-led industries already play a significant role in the development of our city's profile and economy. Given the continued growth potential in revenue, jobs and impact on quality of life, digital-led industries are very much a key driver for regional, local and economic development. BCC is committed to the support and development of these industries and maximising the positive results they can have on Belfast economically.

The BCC Investment Programme 2012–15 sets out our commitments to attracting new businesses, by further developing economic infrastructure to promote growth and inward investment – this will include support for tourism, the creative industries, and digital technology through developments such as:

- an Innovation Centre at Springvale, in the west of the city
- a Digital Hub for Belfast, an initiative to create an international centre of excellence for knowledge, innovation and creativity, focused on digital content and technology enterprises in Northern Ireland. The Digital Hub will be at the forefront of technological advancement and will support some of our most critical and leading edge companies
- an integrated convention and exhibition centre at Belfast Waterfront.

The Executive's draft Economic Strategy identifies the importance of securing additional foreign direct investment and export-led growth. We will work with our partners in Invest NI to maximise inward investment. We will also work with enterprise partners to encourage start-up businesses, and to help small companies grow.

In addressing its role in competitiveness and job creation, BCC will ensure implementation and realisation of its specific targets around:

- human capital development to ensure the ICT skills requirements of the local economy enabling businesses to effectively participate in the digital and knowledge economy
- investment capital (both public and private) to fund the large-scale infrastructure required to achieve the targeted access and penetration levels, the funding and promotion of small, medium and micro enterprises and the funding of innovation
- growth in local digital content, considering the opportunity for application development, the multi-media sector, knowledge creation and the digitisation of government.

While no Enterprise Zones have yet been designated in Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council has proposed to regional government that the area around Belfast Harbour and the North Foreshore be

designated an Enterprise Zone for the renewable sector, particularly for the emerging tidal opportunities that are likely to come on stream over the next five years. The availability of ultra fast connections at this location – as proposed in this submission – will underpin this proposal.

B.2 How will the proposed development enhance the capability of businesses, particularly SMEs, to increase efficiency and revenues?

The benefits for businesses, and in particular SMEs, which will arise from the delivery of our proposal include:

- increased productivity and competitiveness
- improved access to information and facilitation of innovation
- creation of platforms for business to business collaboration
- improved access to markets and opportunities worldwide
- provision of opportunities for businesses to become producers of superfast and ultrafast-enabled content and applications
- development of the knowledge-based economy
- increased flexible working and reducing business travel and commuting
- improved access to education and training.

B.3 What proposals are included for leveraging innovation and new broadband connectivity for the development and delivery of public services?

In developing this application BCC has engaged with the Information Strategy and Innovation Division (ISID) of the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland (DFPNI). The DFPNI is responsible for digital inclusion, management of public sector telecommunications and for initiatives to use telecommunications to transform delivery of public sector services in Northern Ireland.

Our proposal also strongly supports the NIDirect programme, the official Government website for Northern Ireland citizens, providing a single point of access to public sector information and services. NIDirect is very closely aligned to Directgov, the UK government's digital service for people in the United Kingdom, providing a single point of access to public sector information and services.

B.4 How do you propose to stimulate additional private sector investment in order to generate greater accessibility to faster broadband services by businesses and consumers?

BCC is considering a number of proposals to stimulate private sector investment in high capacity broadband development, including those outlined below.

- Anchor tenancy: assessing anchor tenancy opportunities, whereby the Council or one of its partners becomes the anchor tenant in a green-field or brown-field development site. Anchor tenancy can act as a catalyst, drawing service providers to and into locations that have limited access to ultrafast broadband. The Council will continually assess whether anchor tenancy could draw private providers to a surrounding unserved area or community, or motivate the upgrade of existing network infrastructure.

- Collocation facilities and re-use of council or partner infrastructure: the Council and its partners will work proactively with service providers to identify infrastructure or land on which collocation facilities can be constructed. Similarly, the potential use of street furniture and other infrastructure by service providers to further our digital city aspirations will be exploited. This will help reduce cost barriers and also create "carrier neutral" facilities into which companies can connect.

B.5 What commitments to raise skill levels in the local population, providing greater accessibility to educational programmes to equip more people with better knowledge-based skills, will accompany this investment in faster broadband?

As set out in the Investment Programme, BCC will invest £29 million in the period 2012–2015 in people, community and neighbourhoods. Under this programme, BCC will support employability and skills development by providing:

- a £300,000 bursary fund to help 16–24-year-olds move into further education, training and employment,

- over 400 work placement, internship and apprenticeship opportunities within BCC with a focus on graduates and young long-term unemployed and disabled people, and
- 200 employment opportunities at no additional cost to the ratepayer.

As outlined in the draft Programme for Government we are committed to working on a city strategy for employability in conjunction with other partners. We consider that this will address some of the educational and skills challenges that risk impacting on the city's future economic competitiveness. The proposed investment in this initiative will support targeted provision in local communities providing technical and knowledge-based skills alongside essential skills provision.

Further information of broadband-related educational initiatives is set out in A.3.

B.6 Describe, where appropriate, how the project will dovetail with existing Local Broadband Plans (with allocations from BDUK's £530m superfast broadband programme)

In 2011, the DETI submitted a Local Broadband Plan (LBP) for the whole of Northern Ireland. That plan considered the improvements considered necessary to achieve the objective of BDUK and also complemented the plans of the NI Executive. Many of the themes explored in the LBP are also consider in the NI Executive's "Economic Strategy Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity." The Strategy recognises the importance of economic infrastructure, including telecommunications infrastructure, as Northern Ireland moves to grow and rebalance the economy, reducing reliance on the public sector.

Some of the desired outcomes of the LBP relevant to Belfast are:

- provision of access to commercially sustainable, minimum specification 2Mbit/s broadband service for all NI citizens and businesses by 2012
- development of fibred community access hubs which reflect existing and emerging population and business demographics and local council/community needs and aspirations

- Northern Ireland as a beneficiary of forthcoming auction of 800MHz and 2.6GHz spectrum in support of mobile network development and delivery of 4G/LTE mobile services
- scalable and replicable fibre access network which can be further developed to address EU Digital 2020 bandwidth targets and aspirations.

Through the detailed planning stage of the Super-Connected Cities project, BCC will continue to liaise closely with the DETI, the government department with responsibility for Northern Ireland's LBP, to ensure a co-ordinated approach.

SECTION C   COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

C.1 Detail those physical and administrative resources that will be committed to the achievement of objectives in this proposal:

The project will be delivered through the Council's Property and Projects Department which has a dedicated team of programme and project managers, procurement specialists and project accountants. A ring-fenced project team will be resourced within the Property and Projects Department and supplemented with support from the Council's ICT Service (Information Services Belfast) and its Economic Development Unit. A full time project manager will be appointed and external specialist assistance will be drawn on when required.

The project sponsor will be the Director of Finance and Resources and delivery will be monitored and reported on through the Investment Programme governance arrangements.

External delivery issues will be managed through the Belfast Delivery Forum which will include the key government departments such the Department for Regional Development (DRD), the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), the Planning Service, Invest NI and the Department of Social Development.

A chart illustrating council structures is presented in Annex 4.

C.1.1   From the City

This project is considered a key element of the Council's Investment Programme. As such the following resources will be allocated to ensure the project's successful delivery.

- **Political** – all six political parties are in support of the bid and will provide the political leadership both within the Council and across the city to ensure the project is delivered.

- **Officer -** A ring-fenced project team will be resourced within the Property and Projects Department and supplemented with support from the Council's ICT Service (Information Services Belfast) and its Economic Development Unit. A full time project manager will be appointed and external specialist assistance will be drawn on when required. The project sponsor will be the Director of Finance and Resources and delivery will be monitored and reported on through the Investment Programme governance arrangements.

- **Existing Assets** – the following Council properties and facilities which will form a key element of the infrastructure to support the project include:

- the Waterfront Hall, Ulster Hall, Malone House, Belfast Castle and Belfast Zoo.
- North Foreshore
- 22 community centres , 10 leisure centres and the major outdoor spaces and parks across the city.
- **New Assets** – the following proposed capital investment projects included in the Investment Programme 2012-15 which will also form part of the successful implementation of the UBF project include:

  - £4m Digital Hub
  - £10m Girdwood Community Hub
  - £8m Innovation Centre
  - £8m Green Economy Business Park
  - £20m extension to the Waterfront Hall.

C.1.2   From the private sector

The BCC's Economic Development unit will co-ordinate with independent consulting organisations, academic institutions and suppliers to provide peer-to-peer and support networking for SMEs. The objective is to support, to inform and to foster innovation which will see businesses maximise their opportunities.

In addition to White Label marketing activities, potential suppliers will be required to contribute innovative and targeted activity through their Account Management and Marketing capabilities. An example of the type of activity sought would be creative deployment of the BT Broadband Bus.

BCC will work with potential suppliers to devise schemes to minimise start-up costs and time for new businesses in the designated enterprise parks.

C.2   Provide evidence that the City Authority has access to the project management capability and strengths in programme governance to deliver the programme of work.

BCC has a department dedicated to the delivery of major projects with specialists in programme and project management, procurement and project finance all located in one centre of excellence. The Council also has a large number of PRINCE trained project Managers and its ICT service has years of experience in delivering major ICT projects. The Council has a proven track record in project delivery with successful projects such as the building of the £30m Waterfront Hall, the redevelopment of the Old Gasworks brown field site, the creation of the multi-agency Grove Wellbeing Centre and the development, implementation and operation of the Housing Benefit system on behalf of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (the largest single Housing Authority in the UK).

The Council has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the private developers at Titanic Quarter and has established a dedicated team to oversee the implementation of the activities within the MoU. The broad range of skill sets required for implementation of a project of this nature include technical skills; project management capability; community engagement and outreach.

Where specialist activity is required BCC have agreed processes to enable sourcing of the necessary expertise.

Finally, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has overall responsibility for the allocation of resources to major projects and provides oversight for all major projects.

C.3 How will value for money be assured?

BCC is very aware of the potential synergies between the three tiers of our proposal. Opportunities for synergy savings (such as road openings), economies of scale and opportunities for joined up working with public sector partners will be developed in the more detailed plans.

All contracts will be let via BCC's competitive tendering process. All contracts will align with our Investment Programme and will be assessed against predefined and clearly understood objectives. All contracted delivery will be required to report against objectives and will be subject to end of project economic appraisal.

BCC will seek guarantees of matched funding and the contribution of resources from potential partners and suppliers. We will consult with both DETI and independent telecoms market experts in this regard.

When assessing value for money, we may also, subject to confidentiality of information, be advised by or employ benchmark information from Ofcom, the Consumer Council and trusted independent sources in this regard.

Through existing teams and processes, BCC will leverage other funds to enable complimentary projects, contributing to the strategic development of the city.

C.4 Broadband investment will lead to both quantifiable and non-quantifiable benefits. Outline how you propose to measure and monitor the delivery of such benefits that are quantifiable.

Proposed quantifiable measures to be employed will include, but not be limited to:

- the number of on-line service options made available by BCC and our public sector partners and utilisation figures.
- the number of community base activities enabled/delivered/attended.
- delivery of 100% city-wide superfast broadband coverage by 2015
- 50% take-up of superfast broadband by 2015
- Community-based KPIs
- number of, and attendance at, forums to educate potential ultrafast broadband users
- uptake and occupancy rates of properties in supported enterprise zones
- contribution to the efficiency program, as monitored through the Investment Programme.

SECTION D   STIMULATING TAKE UP AND DEMAND

D.1 Detail your proposals for education, information and demand building activities generating greater demand by businesses (including SMEs) and residences for ultrafast broadband services, aiming for 50% take-up across all sectors.

BCC is fully supportive of the 50% target and believes this to be the correct objective.

Campaigns will be developed aimed at targeted groups within the businesses sectors who may benefit from out ultrafast provision. MATRIX – the Northern Ireland science industry panel – is a business-led expert panel formed to advise government on the commercial exploitation of R&D and science and technology in Northern Ireland. The panel has identified a number of industry sectors in which the region has competitive advantage.

These include:

- telecommunications and IT
- life and health sciences
- agrifood
- advance materials
- advanced engineering
- creative industries
- renewables.

Companies in these industry sectors are – in the main – based in Belfast. Reports from the MATRIX panel identify the policy issues required to exploit the strengths and deliver economic success – including investment in technology infrastructure. Invest NI currently supports a number of business-led collaborative networks in new and emerging technology sectors such as cloud computing, digital media, clean technology and tidal energy. We will work with the companies in these collaborative networks to facilitate new technologies and products as well as access to new markets, using the new infrastructure.

The collaborative networks are aligned to the Digital NI 2020 initiative, which is being led by BT's former Chief Scientist Sinclair Stockman. We are currently developing our "Digital Belfast" strategy and brand in conjunction with business leaders and this investment will provide the framework around which this concept is to be developed.

Our promotional campaigns to business will complement the current logon NI programme, which focuses predominantly on non-Invest NI clients, as an introduction to the use of technology in their business.

 Digital inclusion is fundamental if we are to maximise our potential for economic growth, prosperity and social cohesion. Community Centres and Leisure Centres are at the heart of the many diverse communities living in the city and we have over thirty of these properties across the city. Training and schemes based in these centres for home workers, community leaders and social groups will be employed to drive social inclusion and the cross community agenda.

The release of open data sets will be used to increase citizen access to Council data and to forge links/partnerships with small companies for the provision of mobile Apps, stimulating this creative industry locally.

D.2 How will the proposed investment be utilised to transform the delivery of public sector services by making as many services as possible available online?

A number of strategies will be used to this end, including but not limited to:

- further development of the BCC website and the use of social media
- a focus on the provision of more online content specific to young people and tourists (particularly rich video content)
- open data sets provided to stimulate the development of third-party apps
- the availability of on-line services and digital services across the range of Council properties

BCC currently makes a number of services and associated payment facilities available online including:

- licences applications for food, cosmetic, entertainment, market/street trading and health and safety businesses.
- waste, recycling and street cleaning
- building control
- pollution prevention and control.

We will work with our colleagues in the Information Strategy and Innovation Division (ISID) of the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland (DFPNI). The DFPNI is responsible for digital inclusion, management of public sector telecommunications and for initiatives to use telecommunications to transform delivery of public sector services in Northern Ireland, outside of local government.

D.3 Proposals for delivering social benefits, possibly including: online involvement in democratic processes; flexible working; more flexible local labour markets; changing patterns of work; more online commerce.

Transactional services will include increased ability to transact with BCC via the Internet, the release of open data sets, the extended use of BCC facilities such as our community centres (for training, citizen access and community forums) and increased collaboration with public sector organisations. The increased use of mobile technology by council officers will also bring an increasingly responsive and efficient service to the community and support the Council's efficiency programme and accommodation strategy.

While the Council currently streams its monthly meeting, the UBF will help to provide the infrastructure to support greater engagement between elected representatives, citizens, businesses and government agencies.

SECTION E STREAMLINING PLANNING PROCESSES TO SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE ROLLOUT

E.1 Demonstrate how the Local Authorities involved will expedite the installation of new infrastructure by ensuring that wayleaves, streetworks and other permissions required for access to public land and properties are made available in a timely fashion

Although BCC is not responsible for issuing wayleaves and permits for streetworks, we have engaged at the early stages with the Department for Regional Development – the owners of most of the street furniture – and the Department of Environment's Planning Service, who are responsible for processing and approving planning applications, to ensure that they are aware of the proposed works. See attached letter of support at Annex 3

It is suggested that both organisations – along with a range of additional, relevant statutory parties – will be engaged in a steering committee for this project, ensuring that any potential challenges are addressed early on and that these do not inhibit the progress of the project at implementation stage.

The UBF project for Belfast has been identified in the Council's investment programme as a key infrastructure scheme, central to the city's economic regeneration. Given the potential challenges presented by a number of these capital schemes, a "Belfast Delivery Forum" is to be created. This will involve the all the relevant government departments, along with the Council's party group leaders and chief officers. The aim of the forum is to ensure smooth passage of these key investment schemes by focusing resources from the relevant departments to facilitate their progress through the relevant systems, while ensuring compliance with all relevant legal and statutory requirements. Many of these projects have a limited timeframe in which they must materialise – like the UBF – so this will forum expedite their progress to ensure that spend profiles are met.

E.2 Indicate how engagement with large private owners of properties and land will be used to facilitate access for the deployment of infrastructure.

We are a core funder of Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) – the organisation charged with supporting economic development within the city centre. We will work with BCCM to broker discussions with landowners in the city centre who are among their 400-strong membership base.

We also have a developers' forum where we engage with the major private sector developers in the city. Between them, they own a substantial volume of buildings across the city and we can use this relationship to discuss the potential deployment of the necessary equipment, as appropriate.

E.3 Detail any other steps the Local Authorities will take to facilitate network deployment and upgrading.

In addition to expediting wayleaves, streetworks and other permissions as set out above, under our Metro Wireless programme BCC will liaise with the Department of Regional Development to facilitate access to street furniture to host wireless access equipment.

BCC has gained valuable experience of locating network equipment on street furniture through a project in the Holylands region of the City. In the Holylands project, CCTV cameras were positioned on top of lampposts and powered from the same supply. An important understanding of the general planning requirements involved was gained. A key lesson learned was the need to install a continuous power supply at each pole[7]. These lessons have been taken into account in the framing of our proposal and will be used to streamline the planning process.

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[7] Some lamppost power supplies automatically shut down during daylight hours

SECTION F   COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AID RULES

F.1 State aid

BCC will comply with state aid rules by following rigorously the EC's Guidelines[8]. At this stage we have only been able to complete an initial high-level analysis of the situation. The more detailed geographic analysis will be completed from March 2012 onwards; we believe that analysis will need to be more forensic that that done for the final third areas and may even need to be at the resolution of individual streets/postcodes. To our knowledge this level of detail has not been done before and we are therefore working closely with independent advisors, BT, Virgin Media and other operators (including wireless), to develop an appropriate methodology. We plan to undertake an open market review in the near future to determine operators' investment plans over the next three years.

We estimate that up to 20% of Belfast can be categorised as NGA grey or NGA white under the EC Guidelines. This means if Belfast is to have any significant amount of gigabit connectivity then it may be necessary to encourage additional private investment in grey areas, although it should be noted at this stage that we have not been able to do this geographic analysis with residential and SME premises broken out and this may impact how we proceed.

The Guidelines do not rule out intervention in grey areas although the EC requires a more detailed assessment to be carried out. We believe there are two possible routes to intervene in grey areas and we will be considering these when we develop our more detailed bid from March onwards.

A summary of our current thinking on how we will comply with the Guidelines is shown overleaf:

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[8]   Community Guidelines for the application of State aid rules in relation to rapid deployment of broadband networks.

Aspect	BCC comments
Wholesale access	Mandated.
Detailed mapping	**White areas** – intervention allowed; mapping of SME target areas to be done. **Grey areas** – more detailed assessment needed. We will be considering the relevance paragraph 75 in the Guidelines for NGA grey areas following a detailed analysis of our SME target areas, their needs, and current and expected supply. **Black areas** – no intervention planned[9].
Use of existing infrastructure	BCC's own existing infrastructure (BNET) will be made available as part of the project thereby reducing unnecessary and wasteful duplication of resources.
Technology neutrality	Service requirements will be specified, and technology solutions will only be determined through competitive procurement.
Open tender process	Yes.
MEAT	The procurement will be designed to minimise aid intensity.
Price benchmarking	Benchmarks on prices will be established where possible. However, we will be looking carefully at the importance of one-off, upfront costs (e.g. "excess construction costs" to connect premises) vs. the ongoing rental costs, particularly for SMEs.
Clawback mechanism	Yes.

In our Metro Wireless programme, we plan to leverage existing assets from both BCC and other public sector authorities (e.g. vertical infrastructure such as lampposts), and the procurement will be designed to achieve this. While we do not plan to overbuild existing assets we also need to consider the end user experience.

We are very conscious that it will be essential to work constructively with suppliers if our ambitions are to be realised. We therefore plan to work very closely with those operators, and any other relevant operators, throughout the process. Our discussions with all operators to date have been very positive in this respect.

F.2 Engagement with European Commission

BCC would welcome early discussions with the EC supported by DCMS once our more detailed proposal has been developed.

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[9]   We note an apparent inconsistency in the Guidelines: if both paragraphs 75 (a) and (d) apply (e.g. Virgin Media present but no access to its network and BT present but services not sufficient) then we would still class the area as an NGA black area for which intervention would not be allowed. We do not plan to intervene in NGA black areas at this time although we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue in more detail with DCMS and BIS.

SECTION G   FUNDING

BCC is requesting an allocation of £13.7 million from the UBF. Our consolidated funding requirement over the period 2012-2015 is set out in the table below:

Total capital funding required (£)	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	Notes	Total
£	millions	millions	millions		
Private sector investment	4.8	5.2	3.6		13.7
UBF funding	4.8	5.2	3.6		13.7
Other funding (Local Authority &c.)	1.0	1.0	1.0		3.0
Other funding (European/ERDF)	0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0
Totals	10.6	11.5	8.3		30.4

Approximate number of premises, residential / non-residential, covered by the funding	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	Notes	Total
1) 100% Superfast	9,600	9,600	4,800		24,000
Residential	8,679	8,679	4,340		21,699
Non-residential	921	921	460		2,301
2) Targeted Ultrafast	1,320	1,320	660		3,300
Residential	0	0	0		0
Non-residential	1,320	1,320	660		3,300
3) Metro Wireless	12,640	25,300	25,300		63,240
Residential	11,480	22,970	22,970		57,420
Non-residential	1,160	2,330	2,330		5,820

In order to estimate the level of private sector investment, we have drawn on the outcomes of previous telecoms network procurements particularly those managed by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment. We understand that the ratio of public investment to private investment varied from 1:1 to 1:1.67 for the DETI's Next Generation Broadband Project and associated contract extensions. Accordingly, we have sought a 1:1 ratio between UBF funding and private sector investment.

Funding request by programme is set out in Annex 5.

BCC is pursuing nearly £40 million of funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in order to support development of economic infrastructure as set out in the City's Investment Programme 2012 – 2015 (See B.1). Although it is not intended that EU funds will be sought to directly support our Super-Connected Cities proposal, it is anticipated that synergies between the programmes will encourage take-up of superfast and ultrafast broadband.

In order to support an increase in the take-up among local companies, it is planned that an application for revenue funding will be made under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme. This will be match funded from Council resources. The funding will be used to provide specialist mentoring support for local companies, helping them exploit the enhanced bandwidth to improve their productivity.

The Council has also successfully bid for £10 million ERDF funding to develop a Community Hub in the North of the city. This will be one of the key community locations where access to ultrafast broadband will be made available. The Community Hub will provide a neutral space for cross-community engagement, using technologies as a means to overcome traditional barriers.

SECTION H   DELIVERY

H.1 Timely development, procurement and delivery timescales to ensure delivery is completed no later than March 2015

The procurement design for each of the super-connected Belfast programmes will be shaped by a number of factors and options that will be assessed methodically and developed into a coherent procurement strategy. The decisions and definitions set out in our procurement strategy will then enable the Council to create procurement contract notices for publication in the OJEU.

Our early engagement with industry has been very useful in allowing us to understand the potential scope of procurement routes relevant to each of our programmes. On receipt of funding confirmation the Council will accelerate these discussions. We plan to host a series of industry days aimed at confirming investment priorities and alerting the market to forthcoming contract opportunities under each programme. These industry days will then form the basis of more detailed engagement. Where appropriate the Council will call on the assistance of the DETI TPU and also the Centre of Procurement Excellence (COPE) within the Department of Finance and Personnel in support of these activities.

There are various considerations relevant to the selection of the most appropriate procurement procedure. However, without prejudicing the Council's final decision on the procurement path chosen for each of our programmes, at this stage we consider the following OJEU procedures will apply.

- **Programme 1 – 100% Superfast**: Restricted (pre-qualification), given the relative certainty of our requirements, both in terms of specification and coverage area

- **Programme 2 – Targeted Ultrafast**: Restricted (pre-qualification), for the same reasons listed for Programme 1

- **Programme 3 – Metro Wireless**: Competitive Dialogue, as we consider there to be some degree of uncertainty around how the market might deliver our requirements from technical, commercial and legal standpoints. This route will provide the Council with the ability to discuss requirements (dialogue) against potential supplier solutions pre-Tender.

- Wholesale obligations will be detailed in all of our requirements specification documents used in the procurement. Through consultation with Ofcom, requirements will be specified so they do not contradict the wholesale obligations stipulated in the UK, and assurances will also be sought regarding future wholesale obligations that Ofcom might advise of. New networks will be operated on a transparent and non-discriminatory basis to allow for fair competition between retail service providers.

- The scope of procurement for our various projects could be split into multiple lots. The method of determining if or how to choose lots will depend on the project situation and objectives, and an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of creating multiple lots. Procurement with multiple lots would typically be based on dividing infrastructure requirements or geography, but it could be a combination of both of these aspects of the project, as appropriate.

The delivery stage is likely to be a complex undertaking and presents the Council with a variety of challenges. Many of the issues presented during delivery will be typical of those routinely faced by a supplier when rolling out broadband services, whose financial motivators (such as cash flow and profit

targets) will themselves act as a self-controlling/motivational function. Nevertheless, many areas will require close monitoring and management, as even experienced suppliers may be delivering completely new network infrastructure and services.

Key issues that need to be addressed include:

- establishing that coverage and any agreed technology mix satisfies contractual obligations, using robust technical definitions for coverage and technology compliance, including assessment of potential coverage overspill
- checking that supplier's costs and take-up revenues are in line with its proposed business plan and, if necessary, ensuring mitigation plans are put in place to keep the business plan sustainable
- analysing network performance and ensuring that network improvements are initiated if performance is below contractual targets
- using benchmark data to confirm tariffs are consistent, remain competitive in the market and do not distort the market
- validating that proposed changes by the supplier are technically and commercially justified, potentially using independent expert advice
- ensuring that data provided by the supplier is timely and accurate and allows for appropriate payment of State aid at agreed milestones.

Due to the wide range of factors associated with procurement design, it is likely that the Council will need specialist procurement and technical support to ensure the procurement is appropriately designed to satisfy our objectives, and complies with procurement legislation and State aid guidelines.

H.2 Give the proposed timetable for procurement and demonstrate how cost effectiveness will be achieved

Our proposed timeline for procurement and delivery, which will be refined as the individual projects progress is as follows:

Task	Date	
City Council to develop more detailed delivery/procurement plans	From March 2012	*Figure H.1: Proposed timeline*
Completed plans submitted	1 July 2012	
Confirmation of UBF funding	Summer 2012	
Procurement commences	Summer 2012	
Procurement completion – Programmes 1 and 2	Early 2013	
Delivery of Programmes 1 and 2	Early 2013 – Early 2014	
Procurement – Programme 3 completion	Spring/Summer 2013	
Delivery of Programme 3	Summer 2013 – End 2014	

A key method of ensuring cost effectiveness will be the use of lots to ensure contract scope is within the

reach of smaller suppliers. Attracting a minimum number of eligible tenderers will also maintain competitive tension throughout the procurement.

Cost effectiveness will also be obtained by requiring tenderers to submit financial models with their bids. This will allow the BCC tender evaluation team to ensure that bids are robust, complete, consistent with the proposed solution, well-constructed and compliant with guidelines. The financial model requirement will also enable the BCC to evaluate the balance of cost and subsidy required by tenderers.

H.3 The proposal should demonstrate its fit with the government's approach to using SMEs in delivery

BCC – as part of its investment programme – has committed to increasing the percentage of local suppliers to the Council by 10% over the period 2012–2015. Capital schemes such as the Super-Connected Cities project will play a key role in achieving this target. We will do this through a range of awareness raising and information sessions, making companies aware of possible dates for tenders and identifying any specific technical requirements that they may need to consider. We will consider the viability of breaking this contract down into a number of lots to facilitate access by smaller companies and will publish details of successful contractors on our website, so that potential suppliers can engage in discussion around possible sub-contracting opportunities. Our approach to including SMEs fits with the Government targets set out in the Cabinet Office SME Action Plan 2011-2012 and the actions contained in the DCMS's Improving the Procurement Process for Small and Medium Enterprises document.

Sign off

Name of proposal:
I verify that this proposal to the Ultrafast Broadband Fund fits with corporate policy

Signed:

Name: Peter McNaney
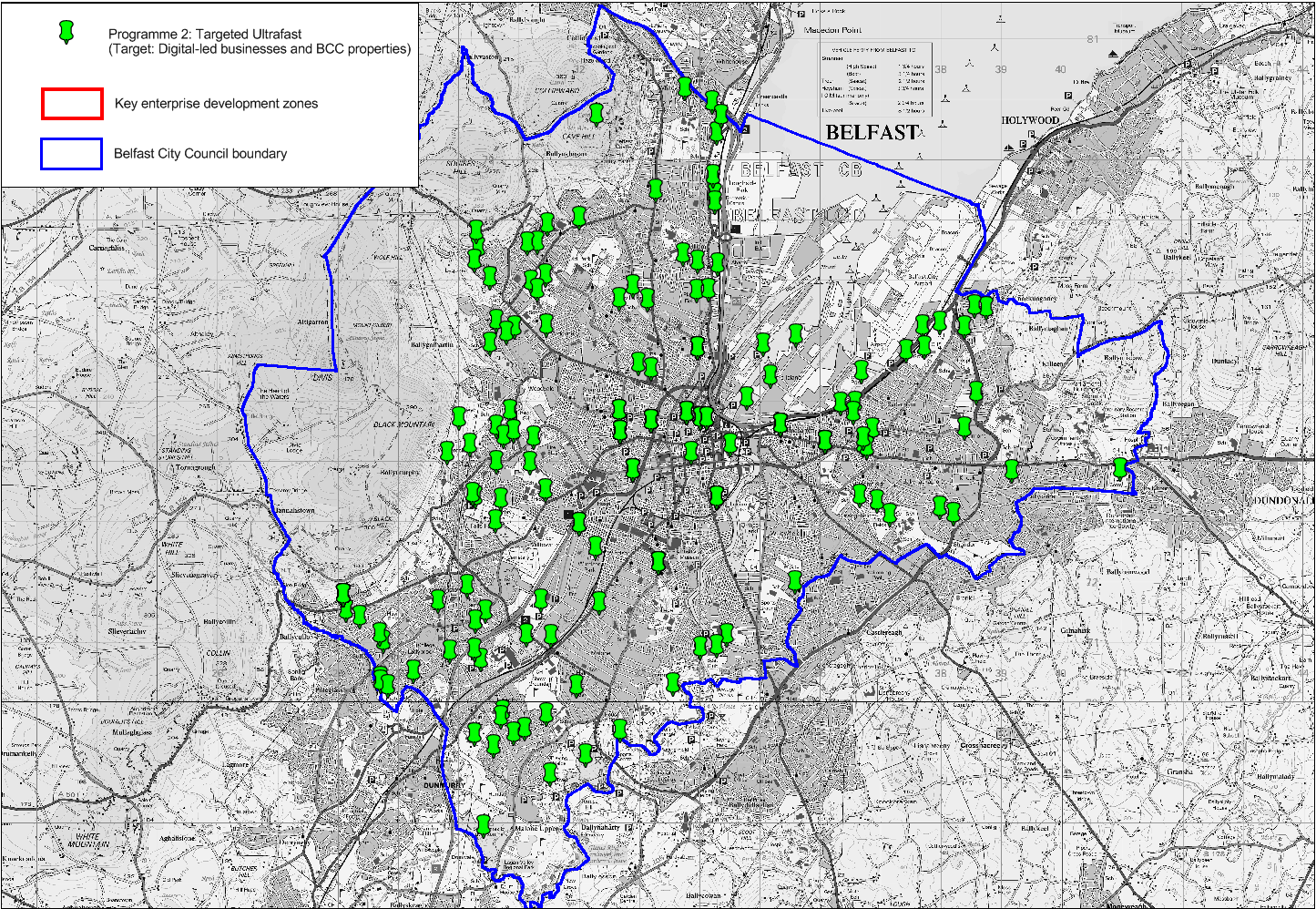
Job Title: Chief Executive   **Date: 13 February 2012**

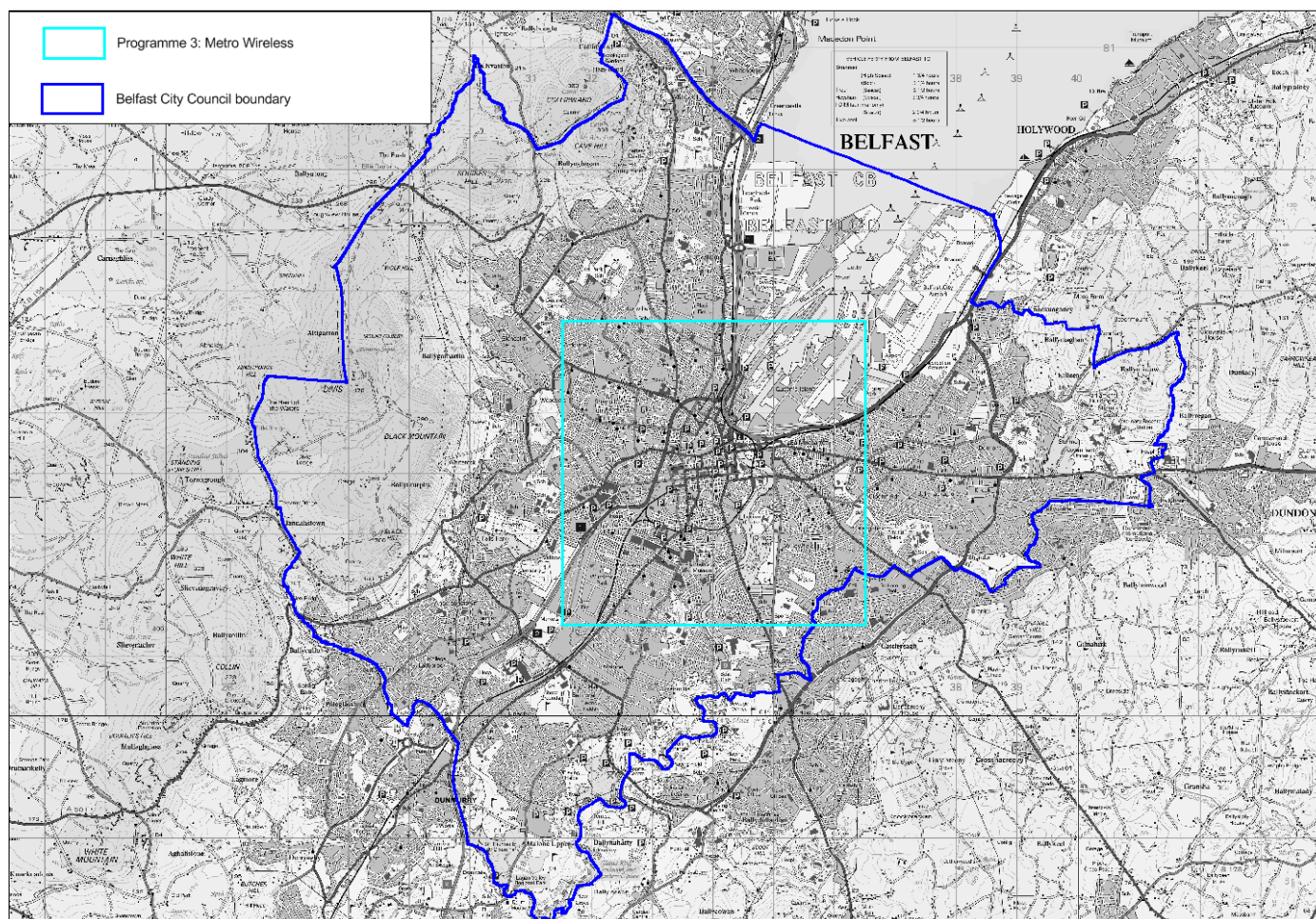# Annex 1   Indicative areas to be served

1.1 Programme 1: 100% Superfast

This slide has been redacted in compliance with section 4.1 of the Freedom of Information Act.

1.2   Programme 2: Targeted Ultrafast

1.3 Programme 3: Metro Wireless

Annex 2   Current infrastructure

This Annex has been redacted in compliance with Section 4.1 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Annex 3 Letters of support

Department of Regional Development

From the Permanent Secretary
David Orr CBE

Department for
Regional
Development
www.drdni.gov.uk

Mr John McGrillen
Director of Development
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8DP

Room 704
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB

Tel: (028) 9054 1175
Fax: (028) 9054 1120
Email: david.orr@drdni.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: PSDRD 25/12

10 February 2012

Dear John

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL – URBAN BROADBAND FUND APPLICATION

I am writing to you to confirm the support of the Department for Regional Development for Belfast City Council's application to the Urban Broadband Fund. The Department recognises the potential impact of super fast broadband infrastructure as a means of encouraging economic regeneration and enhancing access to public services across the city. We are committed to working in partnership with the Council to ensure that all necessary regulatory and statutory issues for which DRD is responsible are adequately addressed to deliver the project should the bid be successful.

Yours sincerely

DAVID ORR

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE   page 1 of 1

Invest NI

10th February 2012

Invest Northern Ireland

Building Locally
Competing Globally

John Mc Grillen
 Director of Development
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall St
Belfast
BT2 8DP

Alastair Hamilton
Chief Executive

Dear John,

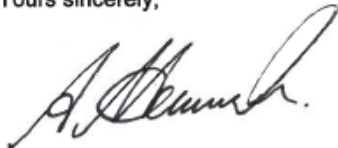**Belfast City Council – Urban Broadband Fund Application**

I am writing to you to confirm that Invest NI is pleased to support Belfast City Council's application to the Urban Broadband Fund.

We recognise the importance of the development of ultra fast broadband infrastructure as a means of enhancing the economic competitiveness of businesses in Northern Ireland and is critical to the successful delivery of the Executive's recently published Economic Strategy. We are working hard to promote the use of new technologies within our client companies to help them drive down costs, enhance their R& D capabilities and to develop their export potential.

You will be very much aware of our recent success in attracting Foreign Direct Investment in the Financial Services, Business Services and Creative Industry sectors which is due in part to the quality of our existing digital infrastructure. If we are to continue to attract this sort of investment and achieve the targets set out in the Economic Strategy it is essential that our digital infrastructure continues to be upgraded and be internationally competitive.

We are very keen to work with you on this project and we will want to work very closely with you to ensure that should the bid be successful that we are in a position to maximise take up of the enhanced services within the business sector as and it becomes available.

Yours sincerely,

INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

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Bedford Street
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F: +44 (0) 28 9043 6536
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alastair.hamilton@investni.com
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DOE Planning

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

DOE
Department of
the Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk

Mr John McGrillen
Director of Development
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall St
BELFAST
BT2 8DP

Belfast Area Planning Office
Bedford House
16-22 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7FD

Direct Line: 028 90 252801
Date: 9 February 2012

Dear John

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL – URBAN BROADBAND FUND APPLICATION

I am writing to you to confirm the support of the Planning Service for Belfast City Council's application to the Urban Broadband Fund. Planning Service recognise the importance of the development of super fast broadband infrastructure as a means of encouraging economic regeneration and social cohesion across the city and we are committed to working in partnership with the Council to ensure that all necessary planning issues are appropriately addressed to deliver the project should the bid be successful.

Yours sincerely

NEIL DUNLOP
Area Planning Manager

Northern Ireland Science Park

9th February 2012

Department for Culture Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1Y 5DH

Dear Sirs

Northern Ireland Science Park is committed to the targets set in the Programme for Government and draft Economic Strategy regarding inward investment, job creation, entrepreurialism and increases in productivity and recognises that a world class communication infrastructure is a critical ingredient in achieving those targets.

Northern Ireland Science Park is looking forward to working with Belfast City Council and its partners to develop this project in detail between March and July this year.

Yours Faithfully

Norman Apsley FREng CEng CPhys FInstP FIAE
Chief Executive

NI Science Park

The Innovation Centre
Queen's Road
Queen's Island
Belfast
BT3 9DT

Tel: 028 90737800
Fax: 028 90737801
Mail: info@nisp.co.uk

Digital Northern Ireland 2020

Dr Sinclair Stockman, Executive Director Digital Northern Ireland 2020

Belfast Super Connected City Proposal

We welcome and support Belfast City Council's application for support under the Urban Broadband Fund (UBF). The Digital Northern Ireland 2020 programme has as its vision to make Northern Ireland the preferred destination for Digital Economy Investment by 2020, and this proposal will provide significant acceleration to these efforts. By taking a proactive approach to investment and exploitation, we have already tripled our Digital Media production studio capability, launched probably the first 10G fully synchronous to every unit privately funded business park and have successfully extended superfast broadband to a significant proportion of the population.

We are supportive of additional investment in the telecommunications infrastructure in the city and a means of encouraging economic regeneration and social cohesion, and ensuring there is no digital exclusion in Belfast. The additional investment in infrastructure will be linked to a proactive support capability, available to businesses and citizens across the city, to ensure that they all have the opportunity to benefit from the potential of ultrafast broadband.

The infrastructure being put in place through this submission will complement that already being deployed to provide speeds of up to 300M within the next 2 years.

Extending superfast access speeds across all parts of the population will ensure all of our children can benefit from the opportunities offered by our advanced C2K online education services, which are already available to all schools, and our goal is to ensure they are available to all children outside school.

We also support the commitment to ensure that the ageing population are provided with support to allow them to improve their quality of life, avoid isolation which so often accompanies old age, and make it easy for them to access government services.

We are committed to the targets set in the Programme for Government and draft Economic Strategy regarding inward investment, job creation and increases in productivity and we recognise that a world class communication infrastructure is a critical ingredient in achieving those targets Invest NI. Our goal is to uplift the performance of all of our businesses to that of best in class which a number of our businesses have already achieved.

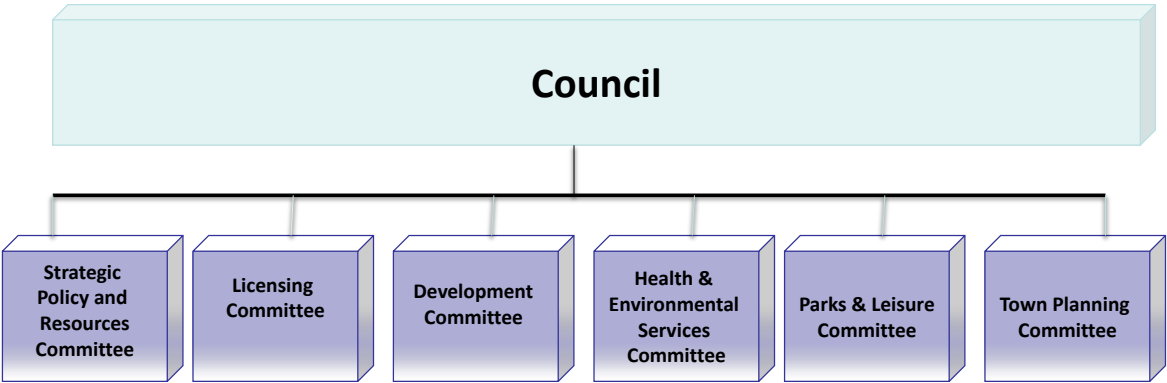A key element of the programme which we fully support is enhancing access to entertainment, educational, cultural and leisure activities, through the creation of a citizen centric urban web presence.

We understand that there is a short deadline for the submission of the initial application for support but look forward to working with you in developing the project details between March and July this year.
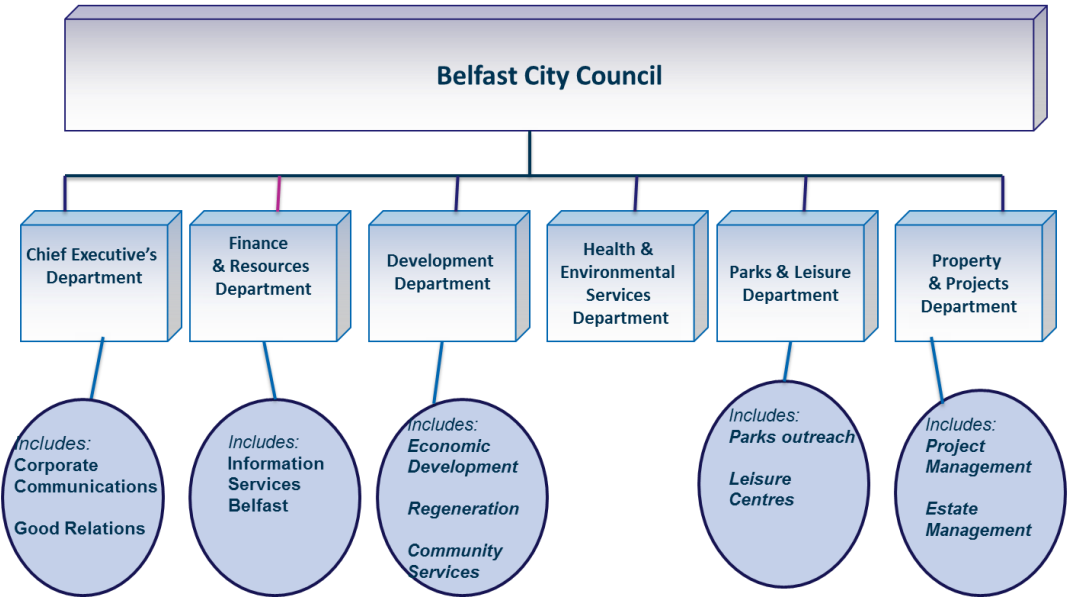
Dr Sinclair G Stockman

Annex 4   Council structures

Belfast City Council Committees

Council

| Strategic Policy and Resources Committee | Licensing Committee | Development Committee | Health & Environmental Services Committee | Parks & Leisure Committee | Town Planning Committee |

Belfast City Council Departments

Belfast City Council

Chief Executive's Department
Includes:
Corporate Communications
Good Relations

Finance & Resources Department
Includes:
Information Services Belfast

Development Department
Includes:
Economic Development
Regeneration
Community Services

Health & Environmental Services Department

Parks & Leisure Department
Includes:
Parks outreach
Leisure Centres

Property & Projects Department
Includes:
Project Management
Estate Management

Annex 5   Funding by Programme

	Programme 1 (£ million)	Programme 2 (£ million)	Programme 3 (£ million)	Total (£ million)
Private sector investment	1.4	7.8	4.6	13.7
UBF funding	1.4	7.8	4.6	13.7
Other funding (Local Authority)	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
Other funding (European/ERDF)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	3.7	16.5	10.2	30.4

Annex 6   Applicant information

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Project Name:
Belfast Super-Connected Cities Project

Lead organisation:
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Lead Contact Details:
Ronan Cregan
Director of Finance and Resources

Contact telephone number: 028 90500532

Email address: creganr@belfastcity.gov.uk

Postal address:
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Proposed start Date of Project: *March 2012*
Proposed end Date of Project: *End 2014*