

## **Oxford Super Connected Cities Project**

### **Summary Outline of the Revised Bid – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

Following further guidance from Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) we have revised the focus of our bid to vouchers, concession wireless and fixed infrastructure. Greater detail as far as we are able to provide is contained in the associated PID which is an evolving working document that will be updated as further guidance and answers to questions and innovative ideas become clear.

Oxford City Council and our partners are confident that we can deliver key improvements to broadband and wireless infrastructure across the city as discussed at a Project Board meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

A summary of the four strands of our Super Connected Cities Project is detailed below.

#### **1. Vouchers – target launch Spring 2013**

We can get vouchers up and running very quickly as soon as clearance is received from BDUK. We will spend in 2013/14 and extend to 2014/15 if Treasury agrees to the time extension. We will target vouchers to businesses and public sector service providers resulting in economic and social benefit.

##### **1.1 Businesses**

In line with recent guidance, businesses across all Next Generation Access (NGA) white and grey areas will be eligible to participate in a voucher scheme.

The proposed scheme has been designed in order to meet the likely demand among businesses. Combining the most recent BDUK mapping information with detailed local business data, we know that there are 1,230 businesses (23.5% of the Oxford total) currently in White or Grey areas not receiving 80Mbps+ connections.

Vouchers will be available to businesses to cover the 100% of the connection cost of a leased line up to £5,000. At zero cost it is expected that around 60% of knowledge sector businesses and 40% of manufacturing, construction and other service businesses will look to secure a voucher.

40% (490) of businesses able to benefit are positioned in locations where it is thought the cost of a single lease line would exceed £5,000. As the cost of a leased line increases to an assumed maximum £10,000 (ie requiring a £5,000 contribution from the business), adoption rates are thought to fall to 10% among knowledge intensive businesses and 5% among other businesses.

**This would see 363 businesses using vouchers to connect to a Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) connection at a cost to the project of £840,000.**

**In addition**, where demand is higher than expected we will discuss with BDUK re-profiling so that we can provide increased numbers of vouchers using UBF underspend from elsewhere.

## **1.2 Public Sector Service Providers**

We will target service providers in the “public sector family” (e.g. GPs, dentists, health centres, community centres, leisure centres, hospital sites, education sites etc.) and provide vouchers to connect to an FTTP connection to improve connection speeds that can result in improved service delivery and improved access to services.

Partners on the Oxford SCC Project Board will undertake a mapping exercise to identify service providers and work proactively to drive take up of the vouchers.

**We will earmark up to £1m from the UBF for this project and are confident that we can deliver this voucher spend within 2013/2014 if required.**

## **2. Wireless – target procurement beginning Spring 2013**

As part of the initial application for UBF, costs associated with a wireless network covering 1.95km<sup>2</sup> of the city centre were developed using the latest available information on the capital and operational costs associated with and strength of service delivered by wireless access points in similar city centre investments.

We will approach providers and undertake a procurement process based on a wireless concession model. We will focus on the core/ arbitrary area of the city centre, but ask for options on wider area coverage from providers. The universities and other partners are keen to see wireless in the Cowley Road area if the providers are able to deliver this.

**We will set aside up to £1 million to fund updates to public assets that would expedite a wireless concession model.**

Given the spread of public assets across the City Centre (including public sector owned buildings and street furniture) that could be offered to the market, we believe that this same network would remain viable as part of a concessionary scheme at zero capital cost to the project.

We would hope that the wireless to the end user will be free. However, modelling detailed in the PID demonstrates that the plan can be commercially viable with relatively small subscriber numbers of the total footfall in the city centre.

## **3. Infrastructure – Ducting - target procurement late spring 2013**

Following our Project Board meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013, we have suggested a project where UBF funding is used to provide a “ready to use” ducting network across the City.

Upon completion the ducting will be available for use by any provider on a lease or concession basis. This will also prevent repeated digging up of roads/pavements by utilities and other services.

This is an idea that is similar in essence to the wireless concession project, where assets are upgraded to enable the delivery of the wireless project. Similarly we are installing (or upgrading) ducting to enable delivery of fibre by any provider (and indeed other service e.g. electric, gas, water).

BDUK are checking whether this project would be permitted.

**In the anticipation that it meets UBF criteria we will set aside £1m to deliver this project.**

#### **4. Fixed Infrastructure Build – Year two project (2014/2015)**

Given our aspiration to get to 100% superfast coverage (and ultrafast beyond this), what remains from the funding after vouchers and public asset upgrades can then be directed to white area FTTC in those (predominantly business dense) areas not being covered by the County Local Broadband Plan project. This will be dependent on State Aid clearance and Treasury spend extension to March 2015.

#### **Contact for further information**

Sebastian Johnson  
Strategic Policy and Partnership Manager  
Oxford City Council

T: 01865 252317

E: [SJOHNSON2@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:SJOHNSON2@oxford.gov.uk)