



**Agenda Item 12  
Council – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

**Recommendations from  
Cabinet – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**70. Coventry's Super-Connected City Plan – Urban Broadband Fund (Round 2)**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Director of City Services and Development and the Director of Customer and Workforce Services, which set out proposals for progressing the Coventry Super-Connected City Plan should the Council's bid for funding through Round 2 of the Urban Broadband Fund be successful.

The 2011 Autumn Statement by the Chancellor announced the creation of a new £100m Urban Broadband Fund (UBF), the aim of which was to create up to ten Super-Connected Cities across the UK with Ultrafast (80-100 Mb/s) broadband connectivity. The funding for these ten cities has since been allocated.

In the Budget of 2012 the Chancellor announced an extension of the fund with a further £50m of funding for round two, with the aim of enabling smaller cities to become super-connected. Eligibility for this phase was restricted to cities with Royal Charters and more than 45,000 core urban dwellings, which included Coventry, among a group of 27-cities.

Coventry's Super-Connected City Plan was submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on 17th September 2012, with a decision expected to be announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

For Coventry the total capital expenditure for this programme was estimated to be £10m. The bid submitted on behalf of the Council requested £5.05m from the UBF. In addition the Council anticipated leveraging £4.03m (40%) capital contribution from the private sector and up to £1m being required from the Council to match other resources. To deliver the project, internal and external resources would be required to support the procurement of a private sector partner and the delivery of ultra fast broadband across the City. To support this, in addition to using existing internal resources to deliver this programme, it was proposed that the Council contribute up to £1m to cover revenue costs (internal and external), working with partners where possible to manage the resource requirements.

A number of funding combinations had been explored as part of the bid submission work with Analysys Mason. The mix of external grant funding from the Urban Broadband Fund, private sector funding and Council resources was seen as the most appropriate mix to secure funding through the bid process.

If Coventry was successful in its application for funding through the UBF, it was recommended that the Council accept the funding and pursue the delivery of the plans set out in Coventry's Super Connected City Plan. To enable this to take place, delegated authority would be required for the Director of Finance and Legal Services to enter into a grant for the funding from DCMS and allocate up to £1m of Council resources towards the capital costs and up to £1m of resources to cover revenue costs.

**RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Cabinet recommend that Council:**

- (1) Delegate responsibility for acceptance of an offer of grant funding to Director of Finance and Legal Services and completion of the grant funding agreement**
- (2) Approve the recruitment of a Project Manager, a technical officer and a support officer to co-ordinate the implementation of Coventry's Super-Connected City Plan (SCCP).**
- (3) Authorise a contribution of up to £2m from the Council Award a contract following the receipt of funding and completion of the procurement process**