

## **Scottish 4G Infill Programme – Q&A – July 2018**

### **Delivery**

#### **Q. Which areas will be covered in the Scottish 4G Infill Programme?**

A. The Programme launches with 16 initial sites but further sites will be added to maximise the available funding. In total, we expect to deliver to around 60-70 notspots.

We are currently analysing potential candidate sites for inclusion. Sites will be considered primarily on the basis of impact on population coverage alongside other criteria, and will also be subject to public consultation later this summer. All additional sites will be agreed with WHP Telecoms Ltd., our delivery partner, and be subject to the cost effectiveness of providing a service to the location.

#### **Q. Where are the 16 initial sites located?**

A. The 16 initial sites located in the following areas:

Carrine  
Applecross  
Tarskavaig  
New Luce  
Crinan  
Strathconon  
Leumrabhagh  
Stromness  
Manish  
Blairmore  
Garvald  
Carrick Castle  
Collieston  
Pennan  
Bruray  
Ettrick Valley

Exact location of masts will be determined through the planning process.

A map showing the locations of the 16 sites is enclosed together with Google Earth extract.

#### **Q. What is the deployment timescale for the initial 16 sites?**

A. Development of a deployment schedule is the responsibility of WHP Telecoms Ltd., and we are looking to make a deployment timescale available as soon as possible. More generally, deployment of the entire programme will take place over four years, from 2018/2019.

**Q. How were the initial 16 sites chosen?**

A. These 16 sites were identified through a public consultation, conducted in August 2017, to derive an initial intervention area for the project. The consultation contained a proposed intervention area which was based upon a limited number of data sources available at the time to the Scottish Government.

**Q. Which mobile network operator(s) will provide services on S4GI sites?**

A. This will be dependent on outcome of negotiations between the supplier and the mobile network operators. We aim to make this information available as soon as possible. All sites will offer services from at least one mobile network operator.

**Eligibility/Addition of Areas to the Programme**

**Q. How will additional sites be chosen?**

A. We are currently analysing potential candidate sites for inclusion. Sites will be considered primarily on the basis of impact on population coverage alongside other criteria, and will also be subject to public consultation. All additional sites will be agreed with WHP Telecoms Ltd., our delivery partner, and be subject to the cost effectiveness of providing a service to the location.

**Q. Community X has no mobile coverage – how can it be included in the Programme?**

A. During the summer of 2018 we will publish a public consultation on additional sites for S4GI and will set out our selection criteria. As well as testing there is no commercial investment planned in these areas, it will allow new mast locations to be proposed, and these will be considered against our eligibility criteria.

**Q. When will the additional sites be confirmed?**

A. Additional sites will be agreed with WHP Telecoms Ltd, our delivery partner, later in 2018.

**Q. What is the deployment timescale for the additional sites?**

A. Deployment will take place over four years, from 2018/2019.

**Q. My community doesn't have any mobile coverage – can we apply for funding from S4GI to build our own mast?**

A. No. S4GI is not providing grant funding for community-led projects.

**Q. Will the Scottish 4G Infill Programme deliver coverage to all mobile not spots in Scotland?**

A. No, this programme is not comprehensive, nor does it purport to be. Funding will be targeted where the most impact can be delivered in a cost-effective way but mobile notspots will remain. In parallel, we are also assessing how public funding could potentially be targeted to deliver coverage to the most rural, remote and challenging of locations.

**Q. MNO X is the only provider in area Z – could the Scottish 4G Infill Programme increase choice here?**

A. State Aid rules dictate that the public sector can only provide subsidy in areas where there is no commercial coverage – this means that if there is one provider offering 4G in Area Z, this area cannot be included in the programme.

**Q. What is SG’s definition of a 4G not spot?**

A. Only *complete* notspots are within scope of this project. These are areas where there is no existing or planned 4G coverage from *any* mobile network operator.

## **Funding**

**Q. How much funding is available?**

A. Up to £25 million.

**Q. What is the EU funding contribution?**

A. The £25 million funding package includes £10 million contribution from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the Highlands and Islands.

**Q. How does Brexit affect the EDRF-funded elements of the programme?**

A. There will be no effect as the funding is protected. The UK Government has provided a guarantee covering all Structural Funds approved before the UK leaves the EU. This programme has been approved within the necessary timescales.

**Q. What is the UK Government funding contribution?**

A. The UK Government is not contributing any funding to S4GI.

## **Supplier**

**Q. Who is WHP Telecoms Ltd.?**

A. WHP Telecoms Ltd. is an established provider of professional and network support services to the wireless telecommunications sector across the UK. The company is involved in every aspect of mast acquisition, planning, design, build and switch-on.

**Q. What experience does WHP have in delivery public sector contracts?**

A. EE commissioned WHP Telecoms Ltd. to acquire, design and build masts across Scotland for the UK Government's Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme.

**Programme Development**

**Q. How does the programme differ from the UK Government's Mobile Infrastructure Project which failed to deliver significant outcomes in Scotland?**

A. We have developed the programme with the input of the mobile operators from the outset and have taken account of lessons learned from the Mobile Infrastructure Project and from our experience with delivery of masts in rural areas.

In addition, we are adopting a more flexible approach to operator presence and will not require services from all four operators to be provided from each mast – as was required in the Mobile Infrastructure Project. To do so would necessitate the achievement of viable transmission between each mast and all four mobile operators' national networks, and this can be very challenging due to limited options for the optimum placement of masts.

Ultimately, such a requirement was the principal reason that so many planned masts for Scotland in the Mobile Infrastructure Project could not be delivered. In addition we will deploy fibre backhaul as far as possible to create future-proofed telecoms infrastructure.

**Q. How have you involved industry in the programme development?**

A. We have engaged with key industry players in the development of this programme since SG published the Mobile Action Plan in June 2016. This engagement continued as we finalised the initial phase of the programme before entering procurement later in 2017; and, moving forward, as we further develop future phases of the programme to address mobile connectivity issues in Scotland over the longer term.

**Q. Will you develop a more comprehensive mobile infill programme?**

A. Delivery of mobile infrastructure and services to the most technically and/or commercially challenging of sites may also require additional levels of government support – beyond capital-only funding. Development of a programme which is fit-for-purpose and delivers this outcome is much more complex and will be progressed over the coming 18 months.

**Q. Telecoms is a reserved area: why is SG investing in this?**

A: The UKG's previous project which aimed to improve mobile coverage – the Mobile Infrastructure Project – only delivered 3 of a planned 84 masts in Scotland. We

know how important access to mobile services is, for businesses, for visitors and for our communities.

## **Wider Telecoms Environment**

### **Q. How are you ensuring competition/customer choice through S4GI?**

A. All masts built through the programme will be built to a standard that supports delivery of services by multiple mobile operators. The masts will be open to all mobile operators for the provision of services, and the programme will guarantee the provision of 4G services by at least one mobile operator per mast. At the delivery stage, we will provide further advice to customers regarding service provision.

### **Q. Will the Scottish 4G Infill Programme overlap with the UK Government's Emergency Services Network rollout?**

A: The Emergency Services Network is designed to provide maximum coverage to motorways and the A & B roads network. We have worked closely with the Home Office to ensure that wherever possible ESN infrastructure can also provide commercial 4G, pushing coverage further still. We also exploring how to exploit potential synergies where there are overlaps – how to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for both programmes.

### **Q. What about 5G? Will the Scottish 4G Infill Programme help future deployment?**

A. This programme is primarily focused on increasing access to 4G services, pushing coverage beyond commercial deployment.

However, we are taking a future-proofed approach in both our R100 and the Scottish 4G Infill Programme to ensure our investments can support 5G in the future. The availability of fibre backhaul is one of the factors what will underpin 5G rollout in the future, and this will be delivered through both programmes. Mobile masts being delivered through infill programme will be built to future-proofed standard. This includes taking fibre connections to the masts wherever possible and building masts designed in such a way to be upgradeable in the future.

### **Q. How will the Scottish 4G Infill programme link to delivery of SG's target to deliver 100% superfast broadband (R100)?**

A. SG's digital connectivity programmes are being developed in alignment to ensure that we capitalise on areas where joint outcomes may be achieved efficiently.

We recognise that mobile technology could potentially play a part in delivering our 100% superfast broadband commitment – if assurances around performance and pricing models for consumers in rural areas can be achieved – and this forms part of our engagement with the mobile industry.

We are also designing our programmes to ensure that new backhaul delivered through the R100 procurements is easily accessible to a range of users, including mobile operators.

**Digital Directorate**  
**July 2018**