

# Speech: Building a full fibre Britain

Thanks for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Like many of you, I often meet interesting people in my job. But there's one serious frustration. And that is, just as I'm talking to them about the many fascinating things they do, instead they want to badger me about their broadband. Every day.

This problem reached its zenith just last week when I met Tim Peake, Britain's inspirational astronaut, and he collared me about the broadband on his space station.

Tim, for next time you're up there, I'm sure one of our ambitious Altnets can help.

So today is different. Because today, it's you who've got to listen to me talk about broadband. And not just my broadband, but everyone's.

It is a full year since I spoke to the Broadband World Forum, and set out our plans for a full fibre future. Today I want to talk about the exciting momentum that is building in this industry and about our plans for the future.

Let's start by acknowledging Britain's current high levels of connectivity.

The recent Global Connectivity Index published by Huawei, once again ranked the UK top five out of 50 major nations in terms of connectivity.

Our superfast connectivity is the best in Europe.

Our economy has the biggest digital economy, by proportion, of major nations, and we have one of the highest percentages of individual Internet usage. President Trump's use of Twitter probably contributes to America's higher score.

This is in no small part because Government has strongly supported the digitalisation of the economy, and made sure the business environment is friendly to new innovations and the growth of the market.

The statistics to back this up are clear.

We have announced that up to £645 million is to be made available to help take superfast broadband coverage to 98 per cent of the nation over the next few years.

In total we are investing £1.1 billion in our digital infrastructure to support the next generation of fast and reliable mobile and broadband communications for consumers and businesses.

And to support businesses we are introducing 100% business rates relief for

operators who install new fibre on their networks.

Superfast broadband is also now available to over 94% of premises, on the way to hitting our target of 95% by the end of the year, and on mobile, the MNOs are legally obliged to reaching ninety per cent geographic coverage by December. 4G coverage continues to rise sharply.

The Connectivity Index also predicts that, as these amazing digital technologies advance, our advantage will drive future economic growth. That's one economic forecast I am prepared to make.

But we can always, always do better.

Over the past year we have published both our Digital Strategy and published our 5G strategy.

We have agreed on the separation of BT and Openreach.

Virgin Media continues at pace with the rollout of Project Lightning bringing ultrafast speeds to more and more of the country.

KCOM are also doing their part and are on track to cover 150,000 premises with their Lightstream Project in Hull.

We have seen record levels of investment into the altnets, including £500 million from Cityfibre and £200 million from Hyperoptic.

Openreach has established its independent board and declared its clear direction in the pursuit of the full fibre future.

We have published proposals for the US0.

We have secured over a billion pounds more of taxpayers' money for next generation technologies and we have introduced rate relief for putting new fibre into the ground.

So we have been busy.

I think this effort demonstrates beyond any doubt the UK Government's commitment to a full fibre and 5G future. We are guided by our mission to deliver full connectivity where people live, work, and travel.

I said a year ago that "I will be on the side of the challenger, helping in every way I can to deliver fair competition and a level playing field."

I meant it then, I mean it now.

And I'm delighted the Altnets are going from strength to strength.

CityFibre, which is already in more than 40 cities, has announced plans to extend its network in more than ten extra cities across the UK.

Gigaclear is bringing ultrafast speeds to consumers and their network now spans over 15 counties.

Community schemes like B4RN and others are expanding.

Indeed INCA has estimated that coverage from its members could potentially reach 18 per cent of UK premises by 2020.

We welcome these developments and encourage more.

But before I set out our next steps on delivering full fibre and 5G, let's turn first to progress on the current technology of fibre to the cabinet or, as it might better be known, copper-to-the-premise.

We have invested £1.7bn of UK taxpayers' money in delivering superfast broadband. For today's needs, it delivers what an average household wants.

Reaching 95% by the end of the year is a very important milestone, and not least with the over £600m of funding from claw-back in the existing BDUK contacts, we hope to go further.

Universal coverage of high speed broadband of at least 10Mbps is an important manifesto commitment that we must deliver, so everyone has today's technology, as we develop the solutions and market for tomorrow's.

On the USO, we have published our consultation on the regulatory option and will be responding to the consultation shortly.

We are also considering the offer put forward by BT to deliver the USO. We welcome their proposal, and we are considering both options on the table, but unless BT can convince us they will deliver universal coverage by 2020 we will have no option but to go down the regulatory route.

We are determined to deliver high speed broadband to all by 2020.

And then, we turn our attention to full fibre. For while the existing copper network is important today, a copper-to-the-premise solution is not fit for the future.

So while completing the rollout of today's technology is important, we are determined to be on the front foot with the technology of tomorrow too. That means full fibre. We cannot stress enough that full fibre is the future.

For we are in the very early days. UK full fibre coverage is just 3%. This will not stand. We will strain every sinew to get it rolled out in Britain.

Over the last year we have unveiled a whole suite of policies to get the UK's full fibre roll out going.

Like the CTTP roll out, this is a mixed-economy approach: with some taxpayers' funding, but the majority of funding from the market.

First, we are helping to level the playing field by supporting insurgent altnets reach their fibre ambitions through the Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund, which will improve access to commercial finance.

Next, we are investing £200m to fund locally-led projects across the UK. This "Local Full Fibre Networks" programme aims to provide the fastest and most reliable broadband available.

Working with providers and local bodies we have shaped a programme focused on improving the business case for the private sector to invest in fibre networks, and to connect even more homes and businesses.

The Local Full Fibre Network project involves upgrading connections into public buildings with fibre, providing gigabit connection vouchers to increase business take-up; and improving access upgrades to publicly-owned infrastructure. And we're working with Network Rail and others to open up existing fibre, and roll out new fibre down train lines. This rail project is incredibly important and we welcome approaches from industry on how to get connectivity down our railways.

We've got going. Our six wave one projects will trial the approaches outlined for the programme, including public sector as an anchor tenant, reusing public sector infrastructure, and testing gigabit vouchers.

We are particularly interested in how the market responds and how much full fibre build is stimulated.

But we're not just waiting for the results. We're already pushing on with the next wave.

We are developing a competitive process for local areas to bid for resources from a 'Challenge Fund', and that is for projects that will support the stimulation of large scale commercial investment in full fibre networks. Recently we invited local bodies from across the UK to submit expressions of interest in the programme, and their responses will help further shape how we operate this fund.

Details on how the fund can be accessed will be announced shortly, and at that launch we will clearly explain the competitive process through which funding will be allocated. Be clear, there will be no ring fencing of funds to particular regions. Regional roadshow events in support of the Challenge Fund process will take place over the coming months.

The crucial thing about all these projects is that they are actively designed to show this works, to level the playing field, and to help make the business case both inside and outside Government.

Of course taxpayers cash isn't everything. So we're also working on reducing cost and ensuring the market is structured right.

Many of you have complained about the cost of laying fibre. Ofcom are working to reduce costs, to open up ducts and poles, to reduce burdens and to get the wholesale pricing structures right. They and we are determined to ensure there is a strong return on the investment that is so badly needed. We very much welcome Ofcom's efforts in these areas and hope the outcome of the Wholesale Local Access market review will further encourage fibre investment. And I welcome the laser-focus of Lord Adonis's National Infrastructure

Commission which is demonstrating the case for and the terrific returns to connectivity.

To reduce some of the direct costs of roll out, on top of the business rates holiday, we have set up a barrier busting taskforce across Government.

In May 2017 the Broadband Stakeholder Group published its report 'Tackling Barriers to Telecoms Deployment'. This looked at the factors slowing down the rollout of UK Broadband, including local authority planning and the business rates regime for fibre.

As a direct response to this excellent report, our Barrier Busting Taskforce aims to reduce the costs of street-works, liberalising planning, to simplify wayleave agreements and tackle every and any barrier to rollout. We will systematically examine every issues flagged in the report, and then working with local bodies to identify solutions or to implement best practice. We are working with local authorities to standardise their approach and reduce bureaucracy, and we're prepared to change regulations if needed, on planning, transport, and wayleave rules if we need to. We want to hear from you about the practical barriers to deployment.

Like you, we want to get the cost per premise passed down.

As well as government funding, and busting barriers, we are determined to ensure that we get the market structure and incentives right.

I believe that the market for full fibre will look very different to the market for copper connections, and we want to see a fully competitive market for full fibre with a panoply of potential players. And I'm pretty sure one of the reasons so many players large and small are getting going at scale now is to play a part in that competitive market in the future.

The first action we took last year of course was to reach agreement on the future structure of BT and Openreach. I welcome that agreement, and I can already see the new Independent Board under the astute Chairmanship of Mike McTigue making a difference.

The test of the success of the legal separation will be twofold.

First, significantly increased investment by BT Group, through Openreach in the country's full fibre digital infrastructure.

And second, Openreach becoming more responsive to its industry customers, both by entering into new arrangements with customers other than BT group, and being proactive and enthusiastic on working with others on the ground, for example opening up access to ducts and poles. Like Ofcom, we want Openreach to provide better access to data on its duct and poles so competitors can plan new networks.

While I welcome the work Openreach are doing to reposition themselves, I am concerned at the speed BT Group are moving in formally implementing the agreed split. Unless we make significant progress very soon we will have to talk to Ofcom about what would be needed to make this happen.

So, we have made progress in improving the market, to ensure we have a competitive market for our full fibre future.

But we want to make sure we get it right.

So in the coming months, we will be examining the market for investment in future connectivity in the UK, to ensure we have markets and regulations that encourage investment now and in the future. The purpose of this work, which we shall lead, will be to build on what has been achieved so far, and make sure that the conditions are as good as they can be to maximise investment in full fibre and new technologies.

This commitment to developing a full fibre Britain will make the country the best place in the world for a telecommunications company to invest, because with full fibre comes unlimited potential for business. I'm not sure if I mentioned, but we really are determined to deliver Britain's full fibre future.

Finally, I want to turn to the interaction with mobile. Because of course what really matters to people is not the mode, but the connection. A fast, reliable, secure connection, whenever you need it, wherever you live, work, and travel.

In a market that's increasingly vertically integrated, the links between fibre and mobile are increasingly clear.

At a basic level, I find it astonishing that a large proportion of 4G base stations today are connected via copper and radio links. While this may be adequate for 4G services, it makes it hard to maximise the benefits of 4G, let alone reach the fast approaching multi-gigabit demands of 5G.

And we're going to need fibre spines in much greater density to deliver that 5G connection.

I don't believe 5G and full fibre are alternatives. Even if 5G can bring great speeds to your phone, there's only ever limited spectrum, so full fibre and 5G are complementary technologies.

Our 5G strategy, published at Budget 2017, sets out how we will lead the world in 5G, and we are working on an update to be published before the end of the year.

In October, we launched a competition to select a number of projects to be funded in 2018/19 as part of the 5G Testbeds & Trials programme.

This first phase of the programme will help encourage the development of a 5G ecosystem in the UK and builds on the foundations laid by our investment in the 5G university research announced at the Budget. As with full fibre, our aim is to demonstrate the benefits 5G can deliver for businesses and how new applications and services can be developed using 5G technology.

The full fibre and 5G programmes are being taken forward under a shared budget, and we hope to fund joint projects that explore the interplay between

the two.

As I travel the world I am yet to find a country more prepared than we are for 5G. I'm absolutely determined that Britain will be at the front of the queue.

So there you have it.

I'll end by saying this.

We all want people to stop badgering us about their broadband. And I want to ensure they don't have to badger us ever again, whether they are up in space or down here on earth.

We have set these goals. We've hired some brilliant people to deliver them. We are clear-eyed in our ambition.

But we can't do it without you.

We can get the ball rolling. We can set the framework.

But it is you, the businesses of Britain, who are going to deliver the connectivity people crave.

So take this moment. Rise to the challenge. And together we will give Britain what it needs to be fit for the future.

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## **Press release: Chief Inspector publishes reports on the Reporting and Offender Management processes, and the Management of non-detained Foreign National Offenders**

The completed reports were sent to the Home Secretary in May and June 2017.

In June 2016, I was asked by the Home Secretary to consider bringing forward some work that I had included in my inspection plan for 2018/19 under the theme of 'Compliance Management and Enforcement'. The two inspection reports published today are the result of that work.

The first examines the efficiency and effectiveness of the Home Office's Reporting and Offender Management (ROM) system, focusing on its understanding and management of the reporting population (those individuals notified of

their liability for detention and removal from the UK). It also looks at the implementation of policy and guidance relating to absconders (individuals who have failed to report and whose whereabouts are unknown).

The second examines the Home Office's management of non-detained Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) towards their removal from the UK. This second report looks in particular at the actions taken by the Home Office since 2016, following the creation of an improvement plan to address identified failings.

In both cases, I found people and processes under strain. The numbers required to report routinely mean that it is extremely difficult for staff at Reporting Centres to ensure that reporting events are 'meaningful', in terms of encouraging voluntary departures or resolving barriers to removal. Meanwhile, the removal of FNOs is regularly frustrated, often by last minute legal challenges, and monitoring non-detained FNOs effectively is a challenge and one that raises obvious public protection concerns.

The ROM system is hampered by poor communication and coordination within the Home Office. The inspection found that recording and treatment of non-compliance with reporting restrictions was inconsistent, and there was little evidence of effective action to locate absconders. The ROM report makes 6 recommendations grouped under 3 headings: achieving the stated purpose of the ROM system; concluding cases; and, managing non-compliance.

The FNO inspection makes 8 recommendations, including completion of the improvement work begun in 2016. While these will not change some of the underlying issues and risks, they are important in ensuring that processes are as efficient and effective as they can be.

I have read with interest the Home Office's responses to my recommendations, which I saw shortly before the reports were laid in Parliament. All but two of the recommendations have been accepted in full. I look forward to re-inspecting both areas of work in 2018, when I hope to be able to confirm that the necessary improvements have been made and sustained. In the case of the partially accepted and rejected recommendations, I will be looking to test that the measures to monitor and manage the risks associated with FNOs referred to in the responses are indeed effective.

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## [News story: Civil news: 2018 contract tender deadlines now approaching](#)

We published answers to questions received from organisations in the following areas in the week beginning 30 October 2017:

- selection questionnaire

- face to face 2018 contracts
- 2018 Civil Legal Advice (CLA) specialist telephone advice contracts.

These are available on GOV.UK on our tender page in the form of 'frequently asked questions' (FAQ) documents.

The deadline for submitting questions about these parts of the tender process was 19 October.

The deadline for questions about the 2018 Housing Possession and Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) contracts is 23:59 on 7 November.

The FAQ for HPCDS work will be available in the week beginning 20 November.

## **Tender deadline reminder**

Deadlines for submitting tenders for civil 2018 contracts are now approaching.

Organisations wishing to deliver civil legal aid services under these new contracts must submit a tender by the relevant deadline.

The deadline for responses is 5pm on Friday 10 November for the:

- selection questionnaire
- face to face contract invitation to tender (ITT)
- CLA specialist telephone advice contract ITTs

The deadline for responses to HPCDS ITTs is 5pm on Monday 4 December.

## **Importance of selection questionnaire**

All applicants for any 2018 contract must complete a response to the selection questionnaire by 5pm on 10 November.

This is in addition to the response to the ITT(s) for the 2018 civil contract work you wish to deliver.

## **HPCDS responses**

Organisations tendering for HPCDS contracts are reminded that they must submit a response to the:

- selection questionnaire by 5pm on 10 November
- ITT for face to face housing and debt contract work by 5pm on 10 November
- relevant HPCDS ITTs by 5pm on 4 December

The deadline for the selection questionnaire and face to face housing and debt ITT is earlier than the HPCDS tender deadline.

## Further information

[e-Tendering system](#) – for submitting bids and using the message boards

[Legal aid civil tender 2018](#) – information for potential applicants

Email [help@bravosolution.co.uk](mailto:help@bravosolution.co.uk) or telephone 0800 0698630 for technical questions about using the e-Tendering system

[Tender process for 2018 contracts opens](#) – GOV.UK news story on 19 September 2017

[Help with how to submit a civil tender](#) – GOV.UK news story on 20 October 2017

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## [News story: Awards recognise supply chain excellence](#)

The annual awards recognise the vital contribution of suppliers to the UK's nuclear clean-up mission and were among the highlights of the NDA Estate Supply Chain Event, held at EventCity on 2 November.

Open to suppliers of all sizes, entries were submitted in 4 categories including:

- skills and capacity development
- technology innovation implementation
- collaboration
- exports

A Minister's award was selected from all of the individual entries.

Ron Gorham, the NDA's Head of Supply Chain optimisation and SME Champion, who chaired the judging panel, said:

Our suppliers play a critical role in delivering timely, cost-effective decommissioning across our sites, and we are delighted to acknowledge their vital contribution.

The standard of entries this year was again extremely high, and the judges and I were particularly pleased with the dedication, creativity and determination shown from companies large and small.

These awards celebrate the commitment of our supply chain and the value they bring on a daily basis, and highlight that the UK industry is uniquely positioned to continue to be successful, not just at home but also abroad.

## **Capability and Capacity Award**

This skills award recognises that capability and capacity in the supply chain are important to support projects and programmes, both now and in the future. The award was aimed at suppliers who may have:

- developed employee skills
- supported the development of supply chain partners
- created opportunities to bring people into the workplace
- developed skills and enabled an environment where differences are valued

### **Winner: University of Cumbria – Project Academy for Sellafield Ltd**

The Academy's vision was to create a centre of excellence for the development of project skills delivery. The Academy has:

- trained over 600 students
- created 8 new supply chain jobs

and is supporting other sectors such as health, construction, third sector and education, as well as delivering a significant cost saving for courses to Sellafield Ltd.

This approach will enable Sellafield Ltd to create the capacity to deliver the projects needed for site decommissioning by providing people with education, training and professional qualifications.

### **Winner: Nuclear AMRC and Rolls-Royce – Delivering Civil Nuclear Sharing in Growth Programme**

The 4-year programme focused on developing the UK nuclear manufacturing supply chain to win work at home and overseas.

Managed by Rolls-Royce on behalf of Nuclear AMRC, the programme was part-funded by the government's Regional Growth Fund.

It was also the first of its kind for the UK nuclear sector. Bringing together government, industry and academia, the £multi-million support package covers:

- strategy and finance
- winning business
- business management
- supply chain management
- value improvement
- manufacturing capacity
- lean production
- leadership development
- employee development

Participating companies have won over £437 million of contracts, securing

5,232 UK jobs and achieving £37.4 million of private sector investment.

## **Technology Innovation Implementation with Tangible Benefits to an SLC**

This award recognises both the innovation and collaboration required to take technology or innovation through to successful implementation at a Site Licence Company.

### **Winner: Nuvia Ltd – Separation Area Head End Stack Dismantling, Sellafield site**

The aim of the project is to dismantle the 61m high separation area head end stack from the existing building at Sellafield, and remove a high-risk structure from a potentially hazardous area. Due to the nature of facilities surrounding the stack, an alternative approach to demolition was required.

Nuvia and Sellafield Ltd worked with Delta International to modify their self-climbing platform, which had been used on conventional industrial sites but never on a nuclear facility. The self-climbing platform will provide a safe working area, with fewer workers required to dismantle the stack.

### **Highly Commended: Underwater Construction Corporation UK Ltd – Use of divers in spent fuel ponds**

Specialist divers were used in spent fuel ponds to disassemble, size reduce, and package for removal of underwater equipment and furniture, as well as the collection of sludge and debris prior to draining the pond in preparation for care and maintenance.

The technique is considered more efficient than traditional methods such as using remote tooling or remotely operated vehicles. The water acts as shielding, reducing doses accrued for the team. This approach was commissioned by Magnox at the Dungeness A site, with UCC performing a total of 265 safe dives in 2 ponds from late 2016 to 2017.

## **Collaboration Award**

This year we again looked at collaboration in its widest form. This award was open to suppliers and organisations who have worked collaboratively within the supply chain.

### **Winner: Carillion, Kier, Morgan Sindall, G & AM Lawson, Amec Foster Wheeler, Balfour Beatty, Costain, M&W Group – People Plant Interface, The Segregation Hierarchy**

A team of Sellafield supply chain safety managers worked to develop new standardised guidance, training, material and mentoring to be implemented across the Projects Delivery Directorate supply chain at Sellafield.

Since March 2017, over 1,000 people from 36 companies have been trained, with an accumulative pass rate of 99%.

Since its inception, the collaboration has expanded to include local SMEs who are in a position to deliver the training themselves. This project is helping to prevent incidents and keep people safe, contributing to delivery of the hazard and risk programme on schedule. It has also led to improved supplier relationships and supply chain safety performance, as well as saving time and cost on training.

### **Highly commended: James Fisher Nuclear Ltd, WYG, Sellafield Ltd – Reduced cost, schedule and risk building inspections**

The successful deployment of UAVs at Sellafield has improved the quality and quantity of data available to assess the structural integrity of buildings, and inform decommissioning strategies. This required development of procedures to overcome stakeholder concerns whilst operating in the most sensitive areas.

The approach is rapid and reduces both the cost and programme impact, and removes working at height risks when compared to traditional techniques. The impact is maximised by the close and collaborative team working between the UAV pilots and the building integrity specialist to ensure that the images are suitable, while additional images can be requested without increasing cost or schedule.

## **Export Award**

An award for companies who have successfully exported overseas, from concepts, products and services originally conceived or implemented in the NDA estate.

### **Winner: Oxford Technologies Ltd – Fuel Debris Retrieval Project, Fukushima Daiichi**

Oxford Technologies is looking at aspects of the Fukushima Daiichi fuel debris removal project. This includes investigation of reactor internals, sampling of fuel debris for analysis and fuel debris removal. Oxford Technologies is developing the access robotic device and a range of tools based on the proven approach in decommissioning projects at Sellafield and Dounreay. The relationship developed through exchanges between the NDA/ NDF, Sellafield/Tepco highlighting Oxford Technologies' work in the UK, notably at Dounreay's shaft and silo project, and Sellafield's FGMSP.

## **Minister's Award**

The Minister's Award recognises the great value, flexibility and innovation that SMEs bring to the mission.

## **Winner: BICO Ltd**

Extract from testimony:

The reactivity of BICO to embrace a problem or challenge was like a breath of fresh air. During dress rehearsals and on several occasions where a problem was highlighted, BICO would attend within a couple of hours to understand the issue, the tool would be taken away, a modified component would be manufactured, assembled and then returned to the operations team. Their enthusiasm and dedication to the project is to be commended.

## **Highly Commended: JGC Engineering & Technical Services Ltd**

Extract from testimony:

The implementation programme for the works was extremely challenging as it has to be designed, installed and commissioned before the end of 2017. The collaboration of JGC and Jacobs (Jacobs acting as sub-contractor) provided the project team with the confidence that they were best placed to deliver this challenging programme. There have been several challenges during the life of the project but with the 'can do' approach from all parties, two of the three project milestones have been met with the last two being completed two months early.

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## **[Press release: Personal Independence Payment \(PIP\) assessment guidance updated](#)**

The PIP guidance now reflects a recent legal decision on the interpretation of people's needs for supervision in order to carry out activities safely.

This change will lead to approximately 10,000 claimants receiving an extra £70 to £90 a week by 2022/2023.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Penny Mordaunt, said:

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) contributes to the additional costs which disabled people face and provides greater opportunities

for them to lead full, active and independent lives. Twenty nine per cent of people on PIP receive the highest level of support, compared to 15 per cent under Disability Living Allowance.

We regularly review the guidance that case managers use to make decisions about someone's eligibility for PIP. These updates will help us continue to ensure people with the highest costs associated with their disability or health condition are receiving the most support.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will be going through all existing cases to identify anyone who may be entitled to a higher rate of PIP as a result of the judgment, which was handed down on 9 March 2017. Anyone who is affected will be contacted by DWP, and their payments will be backdated to the judgment.

In addition, a number of affected individuals will benefit from the following:

- clarifications to the assessment criteria for activities 7 (communicating verbally) and 9 (engaging with people face to face) under the daily living component of PIP so that claimants can score points for both activities
- changes to the criteria for activity 1 under the mobility component of PIP to reflect the challenges that may be faced by people with sensory difficulties if they experience disruptions to a journey

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work has made a [written ministerial statement on the PIP changes](#).

Follow DWP on: