The template

This document provides the business case template for projects seeking funding which is made available through the **South East Local Enterprise Partnership**. It is therefore designed to satisfy all SELEP governance processes, approvals by the Strategic Board, the Accountability Board, and the requirements of the Independent Technical Evaluation process where applied.

It is also designed to be applicable across all funding streams made available by Government through SELEP. It should be filled in by the scheme promoter – defined as the final beneficiary of funding. In most cases, this is the local authority; but in some cases the local authority acts as Accountable Body for a private sector final beneficiary. In those circumstances, the private sector beneficiary would complete this application and the SELEP team would be on hand, with local partners in the federated boards, to support the promoter.

Please note that this template should be completed in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the HM Treasury's Green Book. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-governent

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1. Project name:
Extension of the existing Phase 2 ASELA LFFN project.

1.2. Project type:
Delivery of full fibre broadband infrastructure.

1.3. Federated Board Area:
Thames Gateway South Essex

1.4. Lead County Council / Unitary Authority:
Southend on Sea

1.5. Development location:
ASELA Wide, Including sites in the districts of: Brentwood, Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Thurrock, and Southend.

1.6. Project Summary:
The GBF funding received enabled us to build upon the DCMS funded LFFN ASELA Project and extend the delivery and access to fibre connectivity across the South Essex Region, to realise benefits for local businesses and communities and enable them to grow and flourish post Covid 19. This is already starting to deliver benefits in line with our LFFN Phase 2 project update reporting. However, due to the amount of fibre we needed to rollout and the need to roll back on some sites there were areas that we were not able to address as part of the LFFN Phase 2 project delivery. Securing this additional funding to further extend the fibre infrastructure across the ASELA region into a Phase 3 project, will enable us to address some key "Not Spot" areas that have not yet benefited from investment. Also this funding will enable us to link the fibre infrastructure into the Southend region fibre network which will have significant additional benefits to the whole ASELA region, in terms of sharing of services, cost savings as well as supporting the rollout of a pan ASELA Internet of Things (IoT) network to include the Southend area. Without this additional funding it may not be possible to include Southend into the ASELA IoT network that is planned to rollout over the next year.

1.7. Delivery partners:
The following table provides a list of the delivery partners and identifies the lead authority in respect of the grant funding. The Phase 3 project delivery will be led by the ASELA Digital Programme:

Partner	Nature of involvement (financial, operational etc.)
ASELA Digital Programme	Project Lead / Programme Management.
Southend (Lead Applicant)	Financial Management
Brentwood	*Project Board*
Basildon	*Project Board*
Castle Point	*Project Board*
Rochford	*Project Board*
Thurrock	*Project Board*
Essex County	*Project Board*

1.8. Promoting Body:
ASELA Digital Programme

1.9. Senior Responsible Owner (SRO):
The Project SRO is Sharon Bayliss ASELA Implementation Director. The Project Sponsor is Jonathan Stephenson Chief Executive Brentwood and Rochford Councils.

1.10. Total project value and funding sources:
Overall project values and funding sources are detailed below:

Funding source	Amount (£)	Constraints, dependencies or risks and mitigation
DCMS LFFN Grant	4,436,000	Phase 1 Project was funded by DCMS grant. Phase 1 delivery has completed successfully to time cost and budget.
ASELA Authorities	671,540	This contributory funding from ASELA agreed by ASELA board supports the overall project.
MHCLG - GBF Fund	2,500,000	The Phase 2 project was financed by this GBF funding to extend the LFFN Phase 1 project. The delivery will complete September 2022.
MHCLG GBF Additional Funding	*500,000*	*The funding bid that will extend the project into a Phase 3 delivery.* There are no significant risks for this project to proceed as this will simply be an extension of the phase 2 project (that is just completing), and effectively be a "more of the same" delivery.
Total project value	*8,107,540*	

1.11. SELEP funding request, including type (LGF, GPF, GBF etc.):
The funding requested is £500,000 of Capital Investment from SELEP, to come from the governments GBF initiative, to extend the current Phase 2 LFFN project across ASELA. This additional funding will be in full compliance with the existing State Aid criteria.

1.12. Exemptions:
N/A

1.13. Key dates:
With a view to ensuring best value for money this investment is well placed to compliment and accelerate the existing Phase 2 LFFN project which is now completing delivery. To ensure delivery can be completed by March 2023, confirmation of funding is required by end of November 2022. To ensure no delay the plan will be to verify fibre routes for additional funding, and any potential route issues along with validation of cost once ASELA have confirmation of short listing but prior to awarding of the funding in November 2022 (i.e. October / November 2022).

1.14. Project development stage:

This funding will support an extension to the existing Phase 2 LFFN project which is currently completing the delivery phase. We will continue to use the existing delivery processes and governance that is currently in place for the Phase 2 project and fully approved:

There would be no additional cost for and therefore requirement for funding in respect of:
> Procurement
> Pre delivery detailed design
> Option selection
> Feasibility
> Outline / Full Business Case

The following table shows a high-level project plan of the overall project:

Project development stages completed to date			
Task	**Description**	**Outputs achieved**	**Timescale**
DCMS Investment Board	Submission of the detailed business case for the ASELA LFFN Project.	Approved by DCMS investment board	January 2019
DCMS Gateway A	Demonstration of Project Governance, Validated site list, High level business case to demonstrate that the project will repay the grant funding within 15 years, Identified procurement route, credible project plan	DCMS Gateway A Sign Off	July 2019
DCMS Gateway B	Detailed per site business case, MOU signed off with partners, Legal sign off re state aid, NDA in place, procurement route confirmed and approved by DCMS.	DCMS Gateway B Sign Off	September 2019
DCMS Gateway C	Detailed Value for Money Matrix, Procurement contract validation.	DCMS Gateway C Sign Off	March 2020
Grant Agreement	DCMS Grant agreement sign off with Thurrock Council as lead authority.	Funds Released by DCMS	April 2020

Phase 1 Project Delivery	Delivery of Phase 1 started August 2020 and completed July 2021	Rollout of 130Km of Dark Fibre to 129 sites.	July 2021
Phase 2 Bid Process	Bid process for MHCLG GBF funding started August 2020 through to March 2021	Business case and other documentation for overall bid case. Completed further validations and clarifications through to grant sign off March 2021.	March 2021
Phase 2 Project Delivery	Phase 2 project delivery rollout started July 2021 to complete September 2022	Will have rolled out a total of over 200Km of Dark fibre and to over 200 site connections across ASELA by end of Phase 2	September 2022

Project development stages to be completed		
Task	**Description**	**Timescale**
Phase 3 Prep work	Verification of fibre routes for additional funding, and any potential route issues along with validation of cost. (To be done prior to confirmation of funding but hopefully by this point there will be a confirmation that the project is short listed for funding)	October / November 2022
Planning	Delivery plan and change control completed	December 2022
Delivery	Fibre Rollout, delivery, and testing	March 2023

The GBF funding received

1.15. Proposed completion of outputs:

To date the ASELA Digital Programme LFFN project has provided over 200Km of Dark fibre connectivity across ASELA, connecting over 200 sites, to realise benefits for local businesses and communities and enable them to grow and flourish post Covid 19.

Securing this additional funding will allow a Phase 3 project to further extend the fibre infrastructure across the ASELA region to address some key "Not Spot" areas that have not yet benefited from investment. Also this funding will enable us to link the ASELA fibre infrastructure into the Southend region fibre network which will have significant additional benefits to the whole ASELA region, in terms of sharing of services, cost savings as well as supporting the rollout of a pan ASELA Internet of Things (IoT) network to include the Southend area. Without this additional funding it may not be possible to include Southend into the ASELA IoT network that is planned to rollout over the next year.

SOUTH EAST
LOCAL ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

2. STRATEGIC CASE

This bid for additional MHCLG GBF funding is in respect of an extension of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2020, which resulted in an award of £2.5m in March 2021. The business case for the funding is still essentially the same as it was back in 2020/21 when the original funding was granted, since this bid is to do "more of the same". It is also the case that from the regular project reporting there is evidence that the benefits of that business case are already starting to be realised. This funding would deliver those same business case benefits to the wider area and additional benefits in respect of integration with Southend.

To this end the Strategic case presented for completeness in this bid submission will be largely a replication of what was submitted in the original bid and just amended where variance / update is identified.

2.1. Scope / Scheme Description:

To build upon the DCMS funded LFFN Phase 1 project and the MHCLG GBF LFFN Phase 2 Project and extend through additional funding the delivery and access to fibre connectivity across the South Essex Region and in doing so working collectively as six local authorities in partnership with Government to deliver further outcomes for the public sector but most importantly realise immediate benefits for local businesses and communities to grow and flourish post Covid 19. To leverage the Dark Fibre spines being rolled out in the most cost-effective way, in line with the Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects, thus maximising benefits of a further investment, and driving key strategic outcomes for the region.

The ASELA Digital Programme has a key objective to reach full fibre coverage across the whole ASELA region by 2025. The Full fibre infrastructure project funded by both DCMS and MHCLG is a key enabler to achieve that vision. The additional rollout will aid this goal, by leveraging the existing project to ensure the most cost effective and timely delivery of benefits from this additional funding. The rolled out full fibre digital infrastructure will be a key enabler:

- to kick start the economy, by allowing access to low-cost high-speed broadband
- to aid job retention by reducing business costs through flexible and remote working
- to aid business start-ups with access to full fibre broadband across South Essex
- to support the green agenda by reducing the need for travel by enabling a growth in audio./video conferencing which has been a proven business tool during the Covid pandemic
- to support rural communities and businesses
- to ensure that Care Homes across ASELA have access to fibre connectivity with a consequent benefit to residents and staff
- to create a platform for innovation and look at ways in which community facilities such as village halls can play a role in the support of home working and rural businesses
- to provide a fully resilient full fibre infrastructure platform across ASELA (including Southend), that will support flexible, secure, and highly cost-effective internet connectivity services for public sector partners across the ASELA region.

2.2. Logic Map

The work done for the original Phase 1LFFN bid to DCMS in relation to Inputs, Outputs and Impacts to satisfy the DCMS Gateway process was evidenced in the Phase 2 bid submission to MHCL for GBF funding and was deemed to fulfil the requirements of the logic map. For simplicity we have not included again all the supporting documents in respect of this. If however they are required to be re-sent this can be done upon request.

2.3. Location description:

The Project will cover the South Essex Region under the auspicious of the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) which was formed in 2017.

The South Essex Region includes the local authorities of Southend on Sea Borough Council, Rochford Council, Thurrock Borough Council, Castle Point Council, Basildon Borough Council and Brentwood Council.

All seven Councils have recognised the need to work across borders on strategic issues such as infrastructure, planning and growth. Leaders and Chief Executives agreed in June 2017 to develop a joint 'place vision' for the region up to 2050 that will show how South Essex is a dynamic, modern place providing the conditions for people, communities, and businesses to prosper. Alongside this, some key aims of ASELA will be to transform transport connectivity, open up spaces for housing, business and leisure development through a special strategy and shape local labour and skill markets.
The Project will be focusing on all the local authorities detailed.

In terms of ASELA's location the following key information should be noted:

- Across the six local authorities a combined population of 790,000
- Combined area of 683 Km2
- There is a diverse mix of urban dense and remote rural locations
- Significant deprivation exists in 3 of the 6 authorities
- It is the home to circa 54,000 Businesses
- A work age population of over 400,000
- Annual GVA currently at £10 Billion

- The South Essex Corridor is the home to transport and distribution networks of national and
- International significance and forms part of the strategically important Thames Gateway.

ASELA hosts:
- 1 Airport (the UKs fastest growing regional airport)
- 3 international ports (DP World, Tilbury, and Purfleet)
- 48 Business Parks (110 business hubs)
- 250 miles of river frontage
- 8,000 acres of parkland
- 20,000 acres of forest
- Major Road and Rail infrastructure of national significance (M25, A127, A13, the pending Lower Thames crossing, the Southend Fenchurch Street and Southend Liverpool Street railway lines and the potential extension of Cross rail to Southend Airport.

As a Region we aspire to:
- 90,000 new homes
- 80,000 new jobs
- 1.1m skilled workers

2.4.   Policy context:

The vision and strategy of ASLEA is multifaceted in terms of partners, areas of coverage and scope but what underlies each of the key drivers in our strategic case is a clear aspiration to build on the success of securing circa £7m of grant funding from DCMS / MHCLG GBF fund, to deliver a full fibre infrastructure Project within South Essex and extend the reach of this fibre network to improve access to fibre connectivity for additional public sector sites and in doing so improve services as well as enabling the opportunity for additional businesses and communities throughout the South Essex Corridor to benefit from access to full fibre infrastructure.

Our strategy which has been successful in securing funding from DCMS and MHCLG GBF fund, and is closely aligned with key local and national strategies that are at the heart of this Project is as follows:

- **South Essex 2050 Vision:** Contribute to stimulating investment and demonstrate through partnership how our digital aspirations can be realised.
- **Enable Strategic Objectives:** Enable and support the Partnership's Digital Vision of improving access to connectivity for all.
- **Supporting and Creating Employment Opportunities:** Working with enterprise ensuring that improvements in connectivity are accessible to business and that post Covid there is a focus on supporting current businesses as well as creating the connectivity climate to attract digital related sectors to the Region.
- **Education & Training:** Address the evident deficient in digital skills within the Region through training and education and in doing so create a local workforce which can support future business needs and be ready for future employment opportunities.
- **Social Care:** Address the current poor levels of connectivity into Care Homes across the Region which will ensure that Care Homes within both the Public and Private Sectors can engage more effectively with the NHS as well as supporting their residents with improved access to the internet. This initiative will align itself closely with the aspirations of NHS Digital.

- **Deliver a Rural Focus:** Focus on rural public sector sites which will deliver an economic, social or community benefit.
- **Address Outer Urban Area Connectivity Agenda:** Focus on sites not in the main urban centres but in outer urban/rural areas where there is little evidence of existing private sector investment.
- **Attract Further Private Sector Investment:** Our strategy is part of a much wider digital investment strategy. We are and will continue to promote and attract direct investment from the private sector.
  A strategic approach which is already realising considerable benefits for our communities - Southend (Vodafone and City Fibre), Brentwood, Billericay & Great Wakering (Open reach), Brentwood (Digital Infrastructure), Thurrock (Openreach, Hyperoptic, Netomnia), Virgin Media in Basildon
- **Enable Public Sector Services:** Contribute to innovative ways of delivering public sector services including the creation of a platform to deliver a One Public Sector Network within ASELA and in doing so contribute to our clear aspiration to deliver One Public Estate across South Essex. This is not just for wider local public-sector services, but to enable business incubators and growth hubs.
- **Smart Region Ecosystem:** Contribute to the creation of an accessible fibre platform which will support a future 5G ecosystem (use of public sector assets buildings and street furniture) and enable the South Essex Partnership to promote and proactively implement a sustainable Smart Place Strategy for the Region which will attract investment.

The imperatives, vison and target outcomes for the Corridor are also closely aligned with those of:

- **SELEP:** Alignment with the regional and sub-regional outcomes and aspirations of SELEP (South East England Local Economic Partnership). Created in 2011 SELEP was to provide vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation in South East England.

  In particular the objectives of the full fibre project and this phase 3 bid are closely aligned in delivering against SELEP's Economic Growth Plan Working Together for a Faster, Smarter and More Sustainable Economic Recovery. Whether enabling business resilience and growth, stimulating post Covid growth, contributing to the region's vision of being the UK's global gateway, contributing to communities for the future or being a catalyst for our collective coastline digital connectivity and in particular full fibre connectivity through its accessibility, availability and affordability will contribute significantly to realising these core objectives. This ambition is central to this bid.

- **The Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC):** refers to a vison to create the right conditions in the Thames Estuary to position London and the South East as a world leader for the creative industries on a scale never seen before creating a landmark corridor along the estuary, powering skills, opportunities and new jobs.
- **National 5G and IOT Strategy:** Alignment with national policy around 5G and IoT and the delivery of an infrastructure strategy which will enable the South Essex Corridor to actively participate in future 5G and IOT opportunities. Currently exploring the opportunity of a South Essex Lora WAN IOT Network (business case developed).
  Future Telecom Infrastructure Review: Review issued by National Government in July 2018 which identified the essential requirement that access should be enabled for all communities and businesses to have access to a full fibre capability or equivalent by 2033.

2.5. Need for intervention:

Identifying the need for intervention has been at the heart of the business cases both for the Phase 1 and Phase 2 project and has been replicated in this business case bid..

Ofcom and Think Broadband data was analysed in relation to the Phase 2 bid and continues to be monitored. Infact the ASELA Digital Programme has benefited from a licence contract with Think Broadband which provides quarterly data updates for the ASELA region in respect to full fibre coverage and wider fixed broadband coverage. This has enabled us to identify and continually monitor where the key focus "Not Spot" areas are (areas of poor internet connectivity (Sub 10M). . This bid for additional funding relates to the latest data analysis, looking at:

- Current levels of broadband coverage based on speed and availability
- Current status of full fibre or Gigabit capable networks within the South Essex Region
- Knowledge of third-party private sector investment plans.
- Identifying areas which could benefit from a direct intervention and derive best value from the proposed investment. This has included identifying where strategic breakout points across the deployed fibre network can attract private sector investment and address areas of poor coverage.

2.6. Sources of funding:

Through ongoing market engagement, collaboration with Superfast Essex, and analysis of Ofcom / Think Broadband data, we have sought to capture all areas which will be captured either through private sector investment or alternative public funding intervention. This is an ongoing process from the detailed evaluation process completed for the successful Phase 1 LFFN Project.

Post award of any funding ASELA will continue to engage with the market to ensure that in the event that areas identified for intervention are subject to private sector investment that such areas can be reviewed and removed from the funding model and alternative sites are explored and identified.

The key focus of ASELA is a drive to secure full fibre rollout across the whole region prior to the 2025 and using public money in the most cost-effective way to drive the private sector investment that will enable this objective to be realised.

2.7. Impact of non-intervention (do nothing):

Whilst it is recognised that the market will eventually address the need for improved connectivity it is important for the South Essex Region that no community or area is left behind but can benefit from having access to full fibre infrastructure.

ASELA's key focus is to drive the full fibre rollout across the ASELA region by 2025. The impact of Covid has increased the importance of this for the public sector, communities, and businesses, whether through the way public services are delivered, where and how we work, how communities engage and how businesses can adapt to the way they will operate in the future.

By doing nothing would severely impact progress to full fibre across the whole region, and impact on the governments drive to stimulate the economy post Covid, for which high speed broadband is seen as a key enabler. Businesses and communities would be put at a disadvantage with a consequent impact on future opportunities, growth and well-being, key elements of South Essex 2050 Vision.

This additional funding, by fully and most cost effectively leveraging the existing funding, coupled with the wider ASELA Digital programme initiative to stimulate market investment would be very

timely to deliver maximum value for money and failure to fund this additional intervention would be seen as a missed opportunity.

2.8. Objectives of intervention:

The objectives of the proposed intervention build upon the successful interventions to date. The reasons for intervention and the outcomes derived are multi-faceted but clearly highlight the importance of connectivity and the outcomes that can be realised for communities and businesses.

Grounds for Intervention:

The continuing absence of Gigabit connectivity ie full fibre connectivity has and will have an increasing detrimental impact on residents and business alike:

Stregic:

- Where full fibre connectivity is not available this is limiting the bandwidth available to public sector bodies and organisation including schools, council offices, sheltered homes which in turn is restricting their capability to deliver digital services so essential in a post COVID environment. For example schools without access to full fibre connectivity this places an unfair barrier on pupils and their ability to study and enhance their digital skills.
- Where Gigabit full fibre is not available this is having a detrimental impact on the attractiveness of an area and consequently house prices – which has the potential of making South Essex a less attractive place to live.
- Places limits on home working and accentuates exclusion between haves and have nots
- Absence of a digital backbone/platform which can stimulate local innovation and community engagement.

Social:

- With the removal of PTSN Lines which currently support the delivery of care services in the home the absence of full fibre in the future will have a direct impact on how elderly and infirm residents can be supposed in their home (Independent Living)
- Places restrictions on how community facilities i.e. village halls can be leveraged for the wider public good in the future. The absence of full fibre will mean that village halls cannot perform the growing role of a digital hub in their community which contribute to addressing inclusion for those residents who cannot broadband services.

Business/Economic:

- Absence of full fibre is having an impact on businesses who need better broadband connectivity to promote both their on-line presence and support the way their effectively their service to customers.
- Absence of full fibre can make a less attractive for a business to move that area or invest which a consequent impact on employment, improving skills and future growth.

Opportunities:

Rather than use a table to list these objectives it was felt clearer to list each objective as a bullet point below, and with an explanation of the opportunities that each objective will enable:

- **Business Retention and Growth:** enable businesses and business parks/enterprise hubs with access to affordable and accessible Gigabit Connectivity which will transform these businesses and stimulate future business investment.
- **Digital Sector** the digital sector is has been identified by the LEP as one of its top growth targets for ASELA. This sector is more dependent than perhaps any other on fast, affordable fibre availability. As the availability expands, we believe that digital and creative digital business growth is likely to grow rapidly across ASELA, and this additional funding bid can be a key enabler to realising this key aspiration.
- **Economic Benefit for the Rural Economy:** create a platform of fibre connectivity across the Corridor which will enable us to promote the South Essex Corridor as place for business and will help us attract long term investment.
- **Tackling Skills and Training:** improve access to digital educational and training services which would stimulate business which in turn will generate sustainable job opportunities that could be accessed by local people and in turn generate genuine opportunities to raise aspirations and positively influence skills development.
- **Enablement of Strategic Objectives:** South Essex 2050 Vision, SELEP, the Partnership's Digital Vision of improving access to connectivity for all.
- **Stimulate Fibre Investment:** stimulate and attract further investment in fibre infrastructure within the South Essex Corridor.
- **Smart Borough 5G Ecosystem:** create an accessible fibre platform principally in rural areas which would support a future 5G ecosystem and enable the South Essex Partnership to promote and proactively implement a Smart Place Strategy for the Region.
- **Social Wellbeing & Independent Living:** contribute to creating a platform which will improve access and connectivity into homes and in doing so support the Partnership's key objective of enabling Independent Living.
- **Higher Education:** enable closer engagement with the South Essex College & University of Essex, enabling Edu roam in public sector sites and Govroam across education sites – including schools
- **Independent Living:** contribute to creating a platform which will improve access and connectivity into homes and in doing so support ASELA and other key public sector partner's key objective of enabling Independent Living.
- **Residential Care Homes:** drive and promote improved access to all private and public Residential Care Homes providing potential to deliver Wi-Fi but also provide a platform for the NHS and local Care Services to support residents.
- **Mobile Coverage:** enable and support further engagement with the Mobile Operators to improve mobile coverage across the ASELA Region.
- **Social & Community Benefit**: improve access to Gigabit fibre connectivity in rural areas within the Region providing opportunities for home working, location of more local businesses and access to digital services.
- **Public Sector Services:** enable innovative ways of delivering public sector services including the creation of a platform to deliver a One Public Sector Network within South Essex.

2.9. Constraints:

The potential constraints relating to this project have already been addressed. As an extension to an existing project which is already in delivery, issues relating to procurement, state aid compliance, project management, political sponsorship, wayleaves, delivery methodology and governance are already in place and would ensure that this Phase 3 extension Project could be delivered and realise value for money, without the burden and delay of needing to address all of these key considerations.

2.10. Scheme dependencies:

As this additional funding is an extension to any existing government funded project which has already been subject to a detailed evaluation, we are confident that any interdependent activities which could result in the benefits identified not being realised have already been addressed, and no further consideration in this respect is required for this additional funding.

2.11. Expected benefits:

There was significant analysis of benefits as part of the Phase 1 LFFN bid process details of which were provided in the Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid. Additional benefits were built into the business case for the Phase 2 project and are reported against in the regular MHCLG project progress reports. For phase 3 this benefit review and analysis will again form part of ASELA's half year reports to SELEP and will address the following:

1)   Public Sector Benefit Realisation

From a public sector perspective we believe that this extension to the LFFN Project in delivering a fibre to the premise solution to further public sector sites will enable both the South Essex Partnership, Essex CC and Essex Fire Service and the NHS to realise a number of benefits, realise a return on investment, as well as strategically place the public sector to enable and implement a wider Smart Region/IOT Agenda which will have the potential to deliver a long term legacy in the way the public sector delivers services in the future.

2)   Immediate Benefits
- Further potential savings for each local authority in having access to cheaper and fibre-based connectivity. This is based on actual evidence of savings already derived by one of ASELA'S Council Stakeholders (Thurrock) which has already leveraged the dark fibre infrastructure already deployed.
- Savings for the NHS and Emergency Services in having access to cheaper and fibre-based connectivity.
- Savings for Schools in having access to cheaper and fibre-based connectivity.

3)   Strategic Benefits:
- **One Public Sector Network:** Make a significant contribution to creating a fibre platform which will offer the capability to realise a vision of One Public Sector Network delivering an aggregated connectivity and service platform with long term savings.
- **Care Services and Independent Living:** Enable the Partnership to explore and progress innovative approaches to addressing Independent Living and Care and in doing so realise its 2050 Vision with its focus on Independent Living.
- Connecting Council Owned Sheltered Accommodation, where video conferencing would help reduce clinical times spent visiting sites.
- Connecting specific patient groups to each other, where physical co-location may be less practicable
- Promote advances in telecare sensors and monitoring in the home and social networking opportunities that help older adults stay in their home for longer.

- **Shared Insight:** Build on and share the current experience and insight of current projects being undertaken by public sector bodies within the Partnership across the South Essex Corridor in piloting Smart Place initiatives which have been enabled and accelerated through the availability of fibre connectivity to the premise.

4) **Community Realisation**

- Community Hub projects being progressed with fibre to the premise connectivity providing public space where residents across all localities can access information & advice on a wide range of social issues. The hubs provide support with social issues including housing/ financial/benefit advice, special educational needs, digital workshops (IT support, training/CV writing), English language support.
- The aim of the project is to identify existing community assets and build upon these in each area.
- Hubs to support Adult Services Social Workers, Dementia Navigators, Mental Health Employment Navigators, Advocacy Services and Care Co-ordination (NHS) workers alongside a voluntary sector offer.
- Desired outcome to deliver a strong community presence which maximises early intervention.

5) **Economic Benefit Realisation**

- By enabling additional public sector sites this will stimulate further investment from the private sector to realise access to a fibre to the premise solution with a consequent tangible impact in lifting local GVA and supporting local business investment and growth. This will be building upon interest already being generated by the LFF Project even before delivery.
- Through the design of the network and the creation of strategically located break out points this will create the opportunity for internet providers and fibre carriers on an open access basis to invest and provide services to businesses.
- Retaining existing businesses and attracting new business sectors to the Corridor will result in an increase in Business Rates and a return on Business Rate retention.
- Attract to the Corridor new growth sectors (advanced manufacturing, environmental technologies and energy, digital and creative services, life sciences and healthcare) which will generate higher skilled job opportunities for local residents and consequently higher wages.
- Promote the major regeneration projects already planned for the Corridor with a view to stimulating investment.
- Enable the key strategies and outcomes of the South Essex Corridor and contribute to a long-term legacy of the Corridor.

6) **Social Benefit Realisation**

- **Community Digital Hubs:** Creating Digital Hubs within rural communities by including within this Project a fibre circuit upgrade provision to Community Centres/Village Halls. We believe that this will realise a wider outcome in respect to supporting digital inclusion initiatives, establish each individual centre as a centre for digital training.
- **Residential Care Homes:** Through the availability of Distribution Points and the delivery of a fibre platform provide the opportunity for the market to deliver a fibre to the premise solution to over 200 Private Residential Care Homes across the Corridor.

- Based on our engagement with key stakeholders and as described in our Public Sector benefits, we believe that this initiative could generate significant opportunities and benefits not only for residents but providing a platform to support the delivery of health and social care services to residents in a digitally advanced way.
- **Support Training/Education:** As a key objective and outcome of the South Essex 2050 Vision we are looking to engage with Schools with a view to providing improved access to fibre connectivity which will not only support the actual place of learning within each community (enhance role of the school as an out of hours digital hub) but indirectly benefit local communities and businesses as well.
- **Independent Living:** Whilst we recognise that all parts of the public sector are exploring initiatives relating to Independent Living, our LFFN Project will help us to contribute to our aim of providing access to digital connectivity across the region and in particular address rural areas where the issue of independent living is a significant challenge due to the current level of connectivity.
- **Social Housing:** In areas of the South Essex Corridor where social housing has not attracted investment in improved internet connectivity, enabling a local public sector site could be the catalyst to attract such investment and consequently benefit residents.
- **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** Enable through fibre to the premise a greater focus on home working with a potential positive impact on reducing the carbon footprint by reducing the need to travel

7) Future Telecom Benefit
- The digital vision for South Essex embraces all delivery technologies from fibre to mobile, narrow band wireless to wireless point to point and future technologies such as 5G.
- Building upon our existing LFFN Strategy the provision of additional fibre connectivity will enable ASELA working in partnership with the private sector to:
- Significantly contribute to enabling 5G deployment across the South Essex Region.
- Work closely with ASELA local authorities to develop even further the initiative to make respective council assets available for mobile installations and improve current 4G coverage benefiting businesses and communities.

The Phase 2 benefits as outlined in the business case are still on track to be delivered however, due to the amount of fibre we needed to rollout and the need to roll back on some sites there were areas that we were not able to address as part of the LFFN Phase 2 project delivery. Securing this additional funding to further extend the fibre infrastructure across the ASELA region into a Phase 3 project, will enable us to address some key "Not Spot" areas that have not yet benefited from investment. Also this funding will enable us to link the fibre infrastructure into the Southend region fibre network which will have significant additional benefits to the whole ASELA region, in terms of sharing of services, cost savings as well as supporting the rollout of a pan ASELA Internet of Things (IoT) network to include the Southend area.

From ASELA's perspective establishing an Internet of Things (IoT) LoRaWAN network is considered an exciting and outcome based opportunity for the ASELA authorities to develop new ways of addressing common issues with residents and businesses at scale and leverage the investment made in the full fibre network as the backhaul channel to support the network and transfer data. By extending the full fibre network into Southend as outlined in this bid will mean that Southend can directly be involved in this LoRaWAN through a shared public sector network across the whole of South Essex.

The Internet of Things is the idea of connecting a network of devices (small electronic sensors) which obtain and share data in real time for a specific outcome, all with the aim of driving business improvement and sustainable economic growth.

The Network will enable ASELA working with partners to deploy cutting edge Smart City solutions and would also enable business, public sector, educational organisations and the public to explore, trial and implement Internet of Things (IoT) technology.

Without this additional funding it may not be possible to include Southend into the ASELA IoT network that is planned to rollout over the next

2.12. Key risks:

Building upon a project which has already secured funding and is now in delivery ASELA have already developed and have in place a Risk Register where risks have been identified and where necessary been mitigated and / or addressed.

A Risk Register was part of our final Gateway submission to DCMS which secured the original funding in March 2020, and it has been an ongoing activity of the ASELA Digital Programme to maintain.

In terms of the risks aligned to project delivery these will be minimised as project governance is already in place with our current Contractors and any risks are being addressed as they are identified.

3. ECONOMIC CASE

This bid for additional MHCLG GBF funding is in respect of an extension of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2020, which resulted in an award of £2.5m in March 2021. The business case for the funding is still essentially the same as it was back in 2020/21 when the original funding was granted, since this bid is to do "more of the same". It is also the case that from the regular project reporting there is evidence that the benefits of that business case are already starting to be realised. This funding would deliver those same business case benefits to the wider area and additional benefits in respect of integration with Southend.

To this end the Economic case presented for completeness in this bid submission will be largely a replication of what was submitted in the original bid and just amended where variance / update is identified.

3.1. Options assessment:

As part of the detailed due diligence and evaluation process undertaken by DCMS prior to the original LFFN funding being approved, ASELA were required to develop and submit an option assessment. This formed the basis of the original submission to the DCMS Investment Board in January 2019, and was built upon for the Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid.

The option assessment and evaluation undertaken was in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book guidance and criteria re value for money and return on investment.

Key to this was looking at the need for intervention in order to satisfactorily stimulate the market and hence drive forward the goal of ultrafast/gigabit capable broadband coverage across the whole ASELA region. Coverage was analysed along with the plans of all the major connectivity providers. It was in the original business case developed and accepted by DCMS that an intervention by ASELA to stimulate the market was essential to deliver the required outcomes directly to public sector sites as well as indirectly to local communities and businesses. Options for intervention were analysed.

To support this original bid submission and using Experian data, the location of digital and service-related businesses and sectors were mapped across ASELA. This mapping was aligned to the public sector sites identified as part of the initial bid and where businesses were within 500 metres of such a site this contributed to determining whether a site was included or excluded on the basis of realising further economic value. For example, and where no businesses would benefit from a public sector site being enabled with fibre, the site was likely to be discounted. However where more than five businesses were within a 500-metre radius this would be a key factor in justifying a sites inclusion on the basis that businesses could potentially benefit from access to a fibre connection, with a consequent impact on growth, employment, and business retention.

As part of phase 2 no strategic public sector sites were excluded in areas where the fibre had been deployed, with the exception only where the sites already had sufficient connectivity or a lack of support to engage. This strategic position will be replicated in phase 3.

To ensure that the Bid reflected and would contribute to ASELA's vision, a number of commercial and technical models were explored and evaluated. These included the option of Anchor Tenancy and fibre deployment through PIA to Circuit Fibre Upgrade. From this it was determined that a circuit fibre upgrade solution would deliver a best value technical solution as well as stimulate investment and in so doing indirectly enable businesses and communities both located in proximity to the enabled Distribution Points as wells as properties passed. This approach was accepted by DCMS as the best way to drive and enable innovation, community benefit and realise ASELA's key outcomes and objectives

The phase 2 project and this request for additional funding adds more sites and spine fibre to an existing project delivery and commercial model in the most economical efficient manner.

By definition looking at a different approach in respect of this additional funding would add avoidable delay and significant extra cost without realising any benefit. By extending an existing project which is already delivering and has the support of Central Government (DCMS) this does mean that there is already available a technical and financial solution and model which has been already justified and validated. With our extensive knowledge of the current market and sector, considering alternatives at this juncture would be time consuming and financially wasteful and would not deliver value for money or realise the economic impact that we are seeking to deliver.

For the purposes of this bid what has been undertaken is further analysis on current broadband coverage and planned provision of fibre to the premise within the region. This has enabled us to identify areas of investment where there is an evident market failure and where communities and businesses are not going to benefit from private sector investment in the short to medium term.

This has resulted in us revisiting some of the areas from the Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects that were unable to be included but are still clearly in need of intervention. In addition and in the light of the funding conditions applying to this fund allocation we are also been able to progress a number of sectors and opportunities which based on the previous evaluation would realise both economic and strategic value including:

Collaboration with Town/Parish Councils with a view to enabling Village Halls and Community Centres with full fibre which in turn will benefit local communities but also be a catalyst in creating community based digital hubs which could perform the role of a local office/workspaces.

As can be noted from the above examples, the identification of such sites has been and will be based to both realise a direct but also indirect economic strategic or social benefit.

The Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid referred to the Phase 1 LFFN Project Economic Impact Assessment prepared and submitted to DCMS by ASELA. For the purposes of simplicity this has not been included with this submission but upon request can be provided.

3.2. Preferred option:

The funding sought will be supporting an existing project which has already been subject to full consultation with all ASELA partners and is aligned with objectives of the original LFFN bid. For the purposes of simplicity this has not been included with submission but upon request can be provided.

3.3. Assessment approach:

The original assessment approach was in-line with that stipulated by the DCMS LFFN programme, options assessment, benefit assessment and VFM case all of which were approved by the appropriate subject matter experts before approval by the DCMS Assessment Board, at

Gateways A, B and C. Each gateway providing a higher bar that needed to be met. The Grant Agreement sign off was achieved once Gateway C was passed.

The Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid built on this approach and was accepted. This extension of funding will align fully to the existing business case as it is just providing additional funding to support rollout to additional sites.

3.4. Economic appraisal assumptions:
This section was fully completed for the Phase 2 bid, and this will still apply to the Phase 3 bid, however it is noted that as this bid is for funding under £2m completion of this section is not required.

3.5. Costs:
The additional funding will provide the ability to rollout additional sites and most importantly to extend the fibre spines. This is important as the key focus of ASELA is a drive to secure full fibre rollout across the whole region by 2025, using public money in the most cost-effective way to drive private sector investment that will enable this objective to be realised.

The additional funding will increase the spine and add additional public sector and Village / Community Hall sites and connect the ASELA Full fibre infrastructure into the Southend fibre infrastructure.

Total Project Cost: £500,000

Please note:
1) That this costing model is in line with the Phase 1 / Phase 2 LFFN Project cost model that has been through the DCMS VFM compliance checkpoint.
2) The total amount of additional funding requested by this business case is £500,000 of Capital funding. This adds to the existing circa £7m Capital funding secured from DCMS / MHCLG GBF fund, making a total Capital amount of circa £7.5m.
3) Clarification on any "Sunk Costs": ASELA has contributed funding to the overall project of £671.5K. This cost is funded by ASELA and not included in the capital funding detailed above.
4) Clarification on Inflation assumptions: The project cost will be fixed so there is no need for any allowance for inflation.
5) Clarification on "Risk" allowance applied: The risk is with the supplier as failure to deliver will result in no payment for those connections.
6) Clarification on optimism applied to the economic cost: This is not applicable as the project cost is fixed.
7) Clarification on Local contribution to the overall project: ASELA has contributed to the overall project a total of £671.5K. This is made up of: Project management, Bid Promotion, Planning, Economic Development, Community/ICT/Social Housing.
8) Clarification of price base for non-capital costs: There is no non capital cost in the additional £500,000 bid amount.
9) Clarification of ongoing operating costs: There are no additional operating costs for the scheme.
10) Clarification of ongoing maintenance costs: As part of the 15 Year IRU (captures monitoring and maintenance) which already applies to sites addressed in phases 1 and 2 and will be repeated in phase 3 there are no additional ongoing maintenance costs for the scheme.

11) Clarification of renewals cost: There are no renewals costs for the scheme.
12) Clarification of inflation assumptions for non-capital cost: There are no non capital costs and no inflation assumptions as the capital cost is a fixed cost.

3.6. Benefits:
The following benefits are expected to be realised:

1) Direct Benefits
- Enabling the public sector to drive significant savings through future connectivity requirements
- To create a fibre platform which will offer the potential to implement a new approach to delivering across South Essex a one public sector network.
- To create a fibre platform which will enable the public sector to explore new ways of delivering public services, including innovative approaches to assisted living.
- Cost savings by allowing lower bandwidths to initially be provisioned with upgrades up to and beyond 1Gbit/s, as and when required with no circuit upgrade cost. (With just pro rata increase in circuit rental charges).

2) Indirect Strategic Benefits:
- To support aspirations to create a single fibre-based connectivity platform across the South Essex Corridor with consequent opportunities for driving shared services, service aggregation, and aggregation of operational cost.
- To support both the public, private and voluntary sectors to progress in partnership a wider social value strategy in respect to realising wider community benefit and addressing digital exclusion through the creation of local digital hubs (Local workspaces in rural areas to address future demand for home working).
- Contribute to improving mobile coverage in rural areas through the ASELA Digital Programme providing fibre backhaul within rural areas to deliver backhaul to mobile phone sites.
- Enable ASELA to develop innovative approaches to addressing Independent Living and Care:
  - Using video conferencing would help reduce times spent visiting sites.
  - Connecting specific patient groups to each other.
  - Telecare sensors and monitoring in home /social networking opportunities that help
  - older adults stay in their home for longer
  - Economic Benefit for the Rural Economy: (Retaining existing business and attracting new businesses)
  - Stimulate further fibre investment: (Create Open access distribution points in communities)
  - Smart Borough 5G Ecosystem: (enable ASELA to promote / implement Smart Place Strategy)
  - Social Wellbeing & Independent Living:
  - Social & Community Benefit: (opportunities for home working)
  - Tackling Skills and Training: (improve access to digital services in rural areas)
  - Public Sector Services: enable innovative ways of delivering public sector services including the creation of a platform to deliver a One Public Sector Network within South Essex.
  - Carbon Footprint Reduction through enablement of home working
  - The potential to extend coverage already being realised through the current LFFN Project and enable over 5,000 businesses / 50 business parks/enterprise hubs with

access to affordable and accessible Gigabit Connectivity, which will transform these businesses and stimulate future business investment.

3.7. Local impact:

The local impact element of this project has already been captured in the original bid to DCMS and was central to securing the original funding.

In extending full fibre into areas currently not served by such a capability will be transformative for those communities and businesses.

Furthermore in the light of Covid, enabling Residential Care Homes with this fibre capability, will enable care services to respond more effectively to future waves, but more importantly will put in place an infrastructure which will be a catalyst for change, in the way health and care services are delivered in the future.

3.8. Economic appraisal results:

This bid is building upon the successful DCMS Phase 1 LFFN bid and the Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid which has already fulfilled these specific requirements. A VFM template was included in the Phase 2 MHCLG bid and for simplicity has not been included in this bid but can be provided if required.

4. COMMERCIAL CASE

This bid for additional MHCLG GBF funding is in respect of an extension of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2020, which resulted in an award of £2.5m in March 2021. The business case for the funding is still essentially the same as it was back in 2020/21 when the original funding was granted, since this bid is to do "more of the same". It is also the case that from the regular project reporting there is evidence that the benefits of that business case are already starting to be realised. This funding would deliver those same business case benefits to the wider area and additional benefits in respect of integration with Southend.

To this end the Commercial case presented for completeness in this bid submission will be largely a replication of what was submitted in the original bid and just amended where variance / update is identified.

4.1. Procurement options:
There is no procurement requirement for this project as it is the intention to utilise the same procurement route as for the phase 2 project.

4.2. Preferred procurement and contracting strategy:
The additional funding will extend the existing project with an intention to continue with the existing procurement and contracting strategy. This will ensure that the fibre infrastructure network will continue to be delivered by a qualified delivery partner which are recognised by both Crown Commercial and DCMS. Our contracting strategy has been based on a number of core principles: achieving best value, delivering the most effective technical solution and realising long term strategic commercial and social benefit.

4.3. Procurement experience:
The proposed approach has proved successful in the wider project to date, and it is not envisaged that there will be any procurement issues in respect of delivery from the additional funding.

To ensure continuing best value we will be progressing a on-going bench marking exercise which will entail ASELA adopting a Crown Commercial DPS procurement route which will be completed with 4 to 5 weeks and will not impact on the delivery of this project as all companies on this framework have experience in delivering the specification required.

4.4. Competition issues:
There are no competition issues in respect of this bid.

4.5. Human resources issues:
As an extension to an existing project that is delivering successfully and has the support across ASELA, and that has not had any human resources issues to date, it is not envisaged that any would be forthcoming with a Phase 3 Project.

4.6. Risks and mitigation:
The risk and mitigation process is already embedded within the ASELA LFFN Phase 2 Project and will be central to the management of the Phase 3 extension. A copy of the current risk register can be provided if required.

4.7. Maximising social value:
ASELA are very supportive of realising social value from procurement opportunities. In this instance by progressing the Suffolk Cloud Partnership this limited the opportunities to realise any direct social value, however through this project we are actively progressing opportunities through

service contracts where addition social value can be achieved including affordable broadband, innovative ways of delivering care services, digital training, and apprenticeships.

5. FINANCIAL CASE

This bid for additional MHCLG GBF funding is in respect of an extension of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2020, which resulted in an award of £2.5m in March 2021. The business case for the funding is still essentially the same as it was back in 2020/21 when the original funding was granted, since this bid is to do "more of the same". It is also the case that from the regular project reporting there is evidence that the benefits of that business case are already starting to be realised. This funding would deliver those same business case benefits to the wider area and additional benefits in respect of integration with Southend.

To this end the financial case presented for completeness in this bid submission will be largely a replication of what was submitted in the original bid and just amended where variance / update is identified.

5.1.   Total project value and funding sources:
The total project funding is broken down below showing the split across financial years:

Funding Source	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	Total
LFFN Grant Funding	0	1,663,850	2,772,150	0	4,436,000
ASELA Authorities	36,000	379,540	256,000	0	671,540
MHCLG - GBF Fund	0	946,218	922,857	630,925	2,500,000
MHCLG – GBF fund Additional	0	0	0	500,000	500,000
Total	**36,000**	**3,043,390**	**4,528,150**	**1,130,925**	**8,107,540**

All funding sources apart from the additional funding being sought by this business case are committed.

5.2.   SELEP funding request, including type (LGF, GPF, GBF etc.,):
The funding requested is £500,000 of Capital Investment from SELEP, to come from the governments GBF initiative, to extend the current ASELA Digital Programme LFFN project across ASELA. This additional funding will be in full compliance with the existing DCMS State Aid criteria.

5.3.   Costs by type:

Cost type	Expenditure Forecast				
	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	Etc.
Capital	2,663,850	4,272,150	1,130,925	0	
Non-capital	379,940	256,000	0	0	
QRA	0	0	0	0	
Monitoring and Evaluation	0	0	0	0	
Total funding requirement	**3,043,790**	**4,528,150**	**1,130,925**	**0**	
Inflation (%)	0	0	0		

Project costs are all Capital with the exception of the "ASELA Authorities" costs. The costs are fixed so there is no need to apply any allowance for inflation. The additional funding sought will

be solely capital and detailed plan of the delivery will be determined as part of the Phase 3 prep work carried out in October / November 2022.

As indicated the phase 3 scheme will be subject to a fixed price and the delivery partner will work within the budget. If any sites are identified with particular issues that cannot be mitigated we will work with stakeholders to identify suitable alternative sites that would keep within the budget. This is an approach that has successfully worked well across both phases 1 & 2. There is no requirement to change this approach.

Optimism bias has not been applied to the figures.

5.4. Quantitative risk assessment (QRA):
The costs outlined under the financial case are firm costs. It is the exact scope of the Phase 3 delivery that will be validated as part of the Phase 3 prep work when routes and any issues are confirmed, (Oct/Nov 2022), pre final approval of funding.

5.5. Funding profile (capital and non-capital):
The overall project funding profile is shown below with categories highlighted as either "Capital" or "Non-Capital". Each category also indicates the funding source. All funding is committed apart from the additional funding. The overall project will complete by the end of FY 22/23 and the only cost / delivery not committed around this is the "Additional funding".

In order to mitigate any funding profile delay for Phase 3. Prep work will be covered in October / November, allowing delivery to be focussed in the 3 months January to March.

There is an assumption that funding for the Phase 3 project will be confirmed by end of November 2022.

Funding Source	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	Total
LFFN Grant Funding (Capital)	0	1,663,850	2,772,150	0	4,436,000
ASELA Authorities (Non-Capital)	36,000	379,540	256,000	0	671,540
MHCLG - GBF Fund (Capital)	0	946,218	922,857	630,925	2,500,000
MHCLG – GBF fund Additional (Capital)	0	0	0	500,000	500,000
Total	36,000	3,043,390	4,528,150	1,130,925	8,107,540

5.6. Funding commitment:
Maintaining the principals of the project delivery to date for the Phase 3 project will mean there will be no facility for any cost overruns. If it is found that a spine route / site or sites becomes excessive those sites and or routes will be removed / amended from the deployment and replaced to ensure no overall impact on delivery cost.

This approach is clearly reflected with the existing contract whereby the Supplier is clear that there is no additional funding and that costs cannot exceed the existing budget.

5.7. Risk and constraints:

Because of the processes around the existing project and the fact that Phase 3 will essentially be delivering "more of the same" any project or funding risks and constraints including highway notifications and wayleaves have already been identified and effectively addressed. In the unlikely event that further powers or constraints are required there is appropriate governance in place to handle any such risks.

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

This bid for additional MHCLG GBF funding is in respect of an extension of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2020, which resulted in an award of £2.5m in March 2021. The business case for the funding is still essentially the same as it was back in 2020/21 when the original funding was granted, since this bid is to do "more of the same". It is also the case that from the regular project reporting there is evidence that the benefits of that business case are already starting to be realised. This funding would deliver those same business case benefits to the wider area and additional benefits in respect of integration with Southend.

To this end the Management Case presented for completeness in this bid submission will be largely a replication of what was submitted in the original bid and just amended where variance / update is identified.

The "Management Case" presented in the Phase 2 MHCLG GBF fund bid was directly aligned to that defined in the Phase 1 LFFN project. For that purpose a copy of the Phase 1 LFFN Project Initiation Document (PID) that was submitted and approved by DCMS was included, as the governance structures outlined in that document are what has been put in place and operating in the delivery of the Phase 2 LFFN project.

In terms of governance the ASELA Digital programme which this project sits within has a full governance structure (which is outlined in the PID included in this submission). There is a monthly digital programme board chaired by the Programme SRO, with representation of all the local authorities that oversees the programme. This board reports into the ASELA board / Joint Chiefs. In addition the Digital Programme has a chief exec lead (Jonathan Stevenson Chief exec Brentwood / Rochford councils).

Stakeholder engagement has been and remains at the heart of the ASELA LFFN project. Whether engagement within the public sector, the market, the business community or with residents (Parish Councils) and this continues to help ASELA to formulate the most cost effective and robust strategic, financial, and economic case.

This engagement is supported and enabled by a monthly digital programme board is held with representatives from all local authorities. Site selection is undertaken in close consultation with relevant local authority and communities. Monthly reporting takes place to the ASELA board and Joint chiefs. Ongoing Market engagement has been and is taking place to ensure that the market is fully aware of the opportunities to leverage the deployed fibre. Because of the nature of the project public consultation has not been considered necessary and has not formed part of the engagement process. However how this project with will benefit the public through improved connectivity is at the heart of our aspiration and vision.

A copy of the Phase 1 Comms plan that was submitted and approved by DCMS was included with the Phase 2 bid submission, as the governance structures outlined in that document are what has been put in place and operating in the delivery of the Phase 2 LFFN project. For the purposes of

simplicity a copy of the Comms plan has not been included with this submission but can be provided if required.

The monitoring and evaluation methodology and process is based on the evaluation model and associated template developed by SELEP for phase 2 and this will continue to form part of our reporting process on a quarterly basis into SELEP.

7. DECLARATIONS

Has any director/partner ever been disqualified from being a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act (1986) or ever been the proprietor, partner or director of a business that has been subject to an investigation (completed, current or pending) undertaken under the Companies, Financial Services or Banking Acts?	*No*
Has any director/partner ever been bankrupt or subject to an arrangement with creditors or ever been the proprietor, partner, or director of a business subject to any formal insolvency procedure such as receivership, liquidation, or administration, or subject to an arrangement with its creditors	*No*
Has any director/partner ever been the proprietor, partner or director of a business that has been requested to repay a grant under any government scheme?	*No*

*If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions please give details on a separate sheet of paper of the person(s) and business(es) and details of the circumstances. This does not necessarily affect your chances of being awarded SELEP funding.

I am content for information supplied here to be stored electronically, shared with the South East Local Enterprise Partnerships Independent Technical Evaluator, Steer, and other public sector bodies who may be involved in considering the business case.

I understand that a copy of the main Business Case document will be made available on the South East Local Enterprise Partnership website one month in advance of the funding decision by SELEP Accountability Board. The Business Case supporting appendices will not be uploaded onto the website. Redactions to the main Business Case document will only be acceptable where they fall within a category for exemption, as stated in Appendix G.

Where scheme promoters consider information to fall within the categories for exemption (stated in Appendix G) they should provide a separate version of the main Business Case document to SELEP 6 weeks in advance of the SELEP Accountability Board meeting at which the funding decision is being taken, which highlights the proposed Business Case redactions.

I understand that if I give information that is incorrect or incomplete, funding may be withheld or reclaimed, and action taken against me. I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. Any expenditure defrayed in advance of project approval is at risk of not being reimbursed and all spend of Getting Building Fund must be compliant with the Grant Conditions.

I understand that any offer may be publicised by means of a press release giving brief details of the project and the grant amount.

Signature of applicant	*[signature]*
Print full name	Graham Brace
Designation	ASELA Digital Infrastructure Programme Manager