

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
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6th March 2020

Dear Chancellor,

Budget Submission from Mobile UK

I am writing to you in my capacity as Director of Mobile UK, the trade body that itself represents the four main mobile network operators, Three, EE, O2 and Vodafone, ahead of the Budget to outline measures that we believe support your Government's ambitions for a gigabit-capable nation.

We are working within an unprecedented time when new technologies such as 5G could reshape the economy and how people, businesses and machines connect. To some, the opportunity has been likened to a fourth industrial revolution.

In addition, both the Government and the industry have agreed to work together to invest in the Shared Rural Network, which will significantly extend rural coverage across the whole of the United Kingdom.

To enable the industry to realise these goals, it is also important that the financial viability of network investment and rollout is maintained. New technologies and the demand for ever more data continues to challenge existing business strategies. We believe that to ensure the UK can fully realise the benefits of mobile connectivity the following measures would support the network operators to continue to provide the coverage and capacity needed today and into the future:

- **Introduce Business Rates Relief for new mobile infrastructure development, especially in harder to reach areas**, providing parity with fixed fibre infrastructure. The Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2018 allows for 100% business rates relief for operators who install new fibre on their networks. Expanding this to mobile would help make the installation of mobile infrastructure more economically viable, particularly in areas set to benefit from the Shared Rural Network.
- **Continue to promote full-fibre deployment to facilitate mobile and 5G rollout**. Full fibre networks are essential to mobile deployment and must continue to be expedited.
- **Ensure adequate funding to assist the planning and development functions of local authorities to aid mobile infrastructure development**. Local authority budget cuts have led to alarming decreases in the capability and resources of planning and development departments across councils. To ensure the effective deployment of 4G and 5G, it is vital that they are adequately skilled and resourced if the UK is to meet its ambitions for world-class connectivity.

Mobile networks are set to provide the foundations for the modern economy. The UK is at the forefront of 5G deployment, and the Government's ambitions seek to ensure this continues. As an industry, we are ready and willing to work in partnership with the Government. Our Building Mobile

Britain campaign is focused on fostering greater partnership working between the industry and public bodies.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these policy recommendations in more detail.

Yours sincerely,



Hamish MacLeod
Director, Mobile UK