



**Local Full Fibre Networks Programme
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme
Supplier Bulletin #5
5 July 18**

Introduction

This bulletin is sent to all registered suppliers for the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. It contains both formal information about the Scheme and additional advice and guidance about your participation in the Scheme. Please read it carefully.

We remain very pleased with the take up vouchers and in particular with the large number of Project PRPs we are seeing. Projects are more likely to help extend the UK's fibre network - which is the purpose of the programme. We expect to publish information about voucher take up shortly.

Scheme Updates

Voucher cost audits

All suppliers are reminded that as set out in section 1, part 19 of the Supplier Registration Terms and Conditions, connections for which vouchers have been claimed will be subject to random audit. You are required to respond to any request for cost information about a voucher you have claimed within 5 working days. For **all** cost information presented as part of a cost audit response, evidence must be provided. This should consist of copies of all relevant invoices, bills of quantity or similar supporting evidence. Failure to respond to a request within 5 working days, or to provide supporting evidence may lead to our use of the Issue Escalation Procedure set out in section 5 of the registration documents.

Further guidance on eligible and ineligible connections

We have received a number of requests for clarification about the scheme Connectivity Requirements and in particular about where gigabit capability for existing customer connections might exist. The following range of typical scenarios is provided to provide additional guidance. It does not constitute any change to the existing scheme terms and conditions.

- FTTC to 100/100 EAD - **Eligible** (subject to Step Change)
- FTTC to 100/1Gb EAD - **Eligible** (subject to Step Change)
- FTTP to 100/100 EAD - **Not Eligible** (because Gigabit capability already exists)
- 20/100 EAD to 100/100 EAD - **Not Eligible** (because Gigabit capability already exists, even though Step Change is met)
- 100/100 EAD to 200/1Gb - **Not Eligible** (because Gigabit capability already exists, even though Step Change is met)



Project PRPs

A key principle of the scheme is that the value of the voucher is passed onto the beneficiary in full (and reflects a contribution that the beneficiary would otherwise have to fund themselves). In this context, and as part of the Project PRP commercial assessment process, suppliers are reminded that BDUK will seek evidence to understand how this principle has been demonstrated for each project.

Weekly deadline for claiming vouchers

In part 2 of the PRP application document (p7) we provide information about the weekly deadlines for requesting vouchers or reporting that you have delivered connections. Some of the timing we set out here is a legacy from previous voucher schemes. Now that the portal is fully operational, the following guidance should be followed:

- There is really no weekly deadline for requesting new vouchers. You are able to request vouchers at any time during the week - or weekend if so inclined. The only condition which applies to requesting vouchers is that the request should be made **within a week of the contract** being agreed with the customer. Voucher requests which are older than 10 days will fail voucher validation;
- Claims for payment for connections delivered will not be paid until the customer has validated - by responding to the email notification we will send to them - that the circuit is installed and live. Again, you should notify us that you have delivered the connection to be supported by the voucher **within a week** of doing so.

September scheme review

By September the scheme will have been operating for 6 months. Its purpose is to increase the speed of deployment of full fibre networks across the UK and to encourage the market to invest in the same outcome. As we approach 6 months live running, we plan to revisit a number of the scheme parameters to assess whether these are having the right effect in the market in line with these aims. We are happy to hear feedback about the scheme at any time and plan to carry out an exercise to gather your views about the scheme over the late summer. In the meantime, please start to consider how any changes to the scheme rules would encourage the maximum investment in the UK's full fibre network.

Other information

Contacting BDUK

Suppliers are reminded that they should **only** use LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk to contact us about the scheme. Emails sent by suppliers to other email addresses used by the scheme may not be responded to or may be subject to delays in obtaining a response. Please do not copy your correspondence to other email accounts.

Beneficiaries (Customers) with queries about the scheme may contact us at GBVSHelp@culture.gov.uk. This is also the email account from which customer validation requests are now sent.



Help us to help you

On a daily basis, we spend a lot of time correcting address and email contact information suppliers have provided as part of requests for vouchers. Repeated inaccuracies in use of the Issue Escalation process and may lead to suspension from the scheme.

Our checks about voucher beneficiaries - your customers - are thorough, help us and help save yourselves time by making sure that the information you provide is accurate. Sole traders in particular should be ready to provide evidence that they are genuinely trading from the address for which the voucher is requested. Examples of the kind of evidence we will accept may be found in the [Beneficiary Terms & Conditions](#) (3.iii).

Inform your customers - new “What Happens Next?” leaflet

We have updated the leaflet we make available for your customers telling them how the scheme works and explaining the need for them to respond to our emails to validate both the request for a voucher and that the connection is live.

The updated leaflet can be found at: <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/media> - please share this leaflet with your customers to guide them through the process.

Case studies

Did you know we have started to publish case studies on the scheme website? So far, we have published three, but more are on the way including some about projects that have led to significant new fibre build and residents getting new connections too.

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/for-businesses/case-studies/> take a look and share using the scheme Twitter hash tag: **#GigabitVoucher**

They are your customer’s vouchers - don’t let them lose them!

Vouchers are now automatically cancelled if your customer hasn’t validated the request after 28 days from the date of your request. We have given you the facility to resend the requests if the customer tells you that they haven’t received it - often these are in “spam” or just buried in busy inboxes.

Please don’t resend validation emails to customers who *have* validated the request; it will only irritate them.

The main thing we ask you to do is to stay on top of your customer’s responses by regularly reviewing the download available from your portal logged on home page to see if they have validated your requests and claims.

If you have any questions about the Scheme please contact us at LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk