



**Local Full Fibre Networks Programme  
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme  
Supplier Bulletin #6  
14 August 2018**

### **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.

### **Payment**

Suppliers should note that our payment processes have been updated. We are now making automatic payments weekly using our delivery partner Historic England. When a payment is made to you for vouchers for your customers, the following will take place:

1. You will receive notification by email from [gvsadmin@culture.gov.uk](mailto:gvsadmin@culture.gov.uk) at approximately 01:00 on a Thursday to confirm the total value and number of the batch being prepared for payment. This email will be sent to the remittance advice contact email address you provided as part of your registration for the scheme. The email will also include a separate notification, listing the vouchers for which that batch payment is made. Both files are in .CSV format. If there is a risk that your internal mail system might strip this file type from incoming mail, you may need to speak to internal IT colleagues for advice.
2. When our agent, Historic England make the payment to your bank account, they will send a formal remittance advice that advises you the funds are being credited to your bank.

If you have any questions about either of these steps or payment queries, these should be addressed to [LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk](mailto:LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk)

### **Step Change**

The clarification provided in Supplier Bulletin #5 led to a number of questions from registered suppliers. The examples shown were not intended to supercede, change, or overwrite the terms and conditions around Connectivity Requirements as set out in the scheme documents. Rather, they were intended to provide some guidance on the practical applicability of the requirements to ethernet services. Although clearly EAD is an Openreach term, the same rationale holds for Virgin Media national ethernet and other carriers.

The starting point is to consider the strategic intent of the GBVS which is to encourage incremental fibre deployment (consistent with the Scheme's role with the Local Full Fibre Networks programme). Where fibre already exists, we do not wish to use vouchers to either overbuild existing fibre with another ethernet service, or fund active elements of the



infrastructure which are unrelated to fibre deployment. The Connectivity Requirements (and examples in Bulletin 5#) were written with these principles in mind.

We have consulted again with both Openreach and Virgin Media and both have confirmed that (since Q1 2018) new ethernet 100Mb bearers are capable of remote ("Soft") upgrade to 1Gb. For the upgrade of some older 100Mb bearers, dependent on the exact deployment it may be necessary to replace some items of active equipment in the exchange and at the customer end. This does not involve by necessity any activity associated with the underlying fibre (such as digging civils etc) although to minimise downtime the supplier may provision the new active equipment using a spare fibre in the existing cable and then cut the customer service across. From an engineering perspective this can be accomplished within the 10 working days (although from a product perspective the supplier may specify a 30 day lead time). We still consider though that these cases fall within the intent of the guidance - and the examples in bulletin #5 were an attempt to illustrate this.

**In summary - any existing leased line delivered by fibre is considered to be gigabit capable and properties with such a service are not eligible for a voucher as part of the Scheme.**

If there are scenarios where the eligibility is uncertain, then please contact the [LFFN mailbox](#) who will be able to provide further advice.

### **Streetworks Toolkit**

The DCMS Barrier Busting Task Force published the first of a series of Toolkits on 23 July relating to street works:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/framework-for-uk-fibre-delivery-street-works>

This is one of the key barriers to rolling network infrastructure so is to be welcomed. This toolkit was referenced in the [Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review](#) also published in July which you may also wish to review.

Later this year we will also publish a Wayleaves Toolkit, for both Public and Private Wayleaves. We will advise all registered suppliers through this bulletin when that takes place.

### **Voucher Dispute Codes**

In order to provide a consistent approach to advising suppliers about disputes we raise relating to a voucher request, we have developed a standard set of codes to explain the reasons for a dispute. A list of these codes is attached as an annexe to this bulletin. Please retain a copy for future reference. A copy has also been uploaded to the supplier area of the Scheme website [HERE](#). You must be logged on as a user to access these pages.

### **SME Evidence**

We draw your attention to clause 3.iii of the Beneficiary Terms and Conditions. SMEs must be able to provide evidence that they are:



- A legitimate trading enterprise, and
- that they actually trade from the address(es) for which vouchers are requested.

When you offer SMEs vouchers, it is helpful if you gather this evidence in case we request it as part of our sample checks.

### **Commercially Deployed FTTP**

The Scheme exists to support the cost of new gigabit capable connections. Where suppliers - including Openreach - have already deployed a full fibre infrastructure close to a premise vouchers may only be used to support the cost of connections where these are demonstrably greater than £500. Standard pricing for these services is often significantly less than this sum. Vouchers may be used to support additional (EEC) civils costs of delivering the service to the premise subject to the scheme's terms and conditions.

If you have any questions about the Scheme please contact us at:

[LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk](mailto:LFFNSuppliers@culture.gov.uk).