

**Local Full Fibre Networks Programme
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme
Supplier Bulletin #16
RURAL GIGABIT VOUCHERS – 23rd May 2019**

Rural Gigabit Vouchers – Operational Guidance for Suppliers

Introduction

Further to Supplier Bulletin #15, Rural Gigabit vouchers have now been introduced as part of the Gigabit Voucher Scheme. As a reminder, the key characteristics of Rural Gigabit vouchers are:

- Up to £3,500 for eligible SMEs.
- Up to £1,500 for residents.
- Project Pre-Registered Packages only (i.e. no Standard PRPs)
- Available in defined “rural” areas (by postcode in all parts of the UK), with existing speeds of <30 Mb/s
- Resident only projects are eligible
- Connections must be Gigabit-capable, with a minimum speed taken by the customer of 30 Mb/s

This Bulletin contains important operational guidance to Suppliers in relation to Rural Gigabit vouchers.

Postcode Checker

As notified in Supplier Bulletin #14, there is a postcode checker within the Gigabit vouchers website for residents & businesses and also on the supplier home page. This checker has now been updated to check potential eligibility for rural gigabit vouchers (in addition to existing functionality to check for potential State Aid eligibility issues, and to indicate potential eligibility for Welsh top-up funding). For reference, the postcode lookup will generate one of the following three messages:

Message	Notes/Further Action
<p>1. Checks show a possible match for existing state aid intervention in this postcode. Further investigation would be required by BDUK before a voucher can be issued.</p>	<p>This indicates that the postcode may be within a State Aid intervention area, therefore ineligible for Gigabit vouchers. Suppliers should check the relevant local body’s website to seek confirmation that the premise is within their State Aid funded contract.</p> <p>Project PRPs should not be submitted to BDUK if this message has been received and checks with the local body’s website have not been conducted.</p>
<p>2. This postcode meets our rurality criteria and some of the addresses in the postcode may be eligible for a rural gigabit voucher. For more information, see Rural Gigabit vouchers guidance [link to page]</p>	<p>In order to confirm eligibility for Rural vouchers for specific premises, suppliers should check Ofcom Connected Nations data at: https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage to ensure that the premise meets the speed criteria (<30Mb/s) for Rural vouchers</p>
<p>3. In Wales increased funding may be available; click here for more information</p>	<p>Indicates that the postcode qualifies for Welsh top-up funding</p>

Existing Project PRPs

If suppliers have existing PRPs that they believe may be eligible for Rural Gigabit vouchers then (subject to the eligibility checks set out above), suppliers should submit a change request using the PRP Change Request form to describe the required changes. Suppliers will be required to confirm the justification for the requested change, and will be required to demonstrate that the Project will continue to meet the rules of the Scheme (for example, that the full value of the voucher is being realised by the beneficiary).

New Project PRPs

If suppliers have new PRPs that they believe may be eligible for Rural Gigabit vouchers then (subject to the eligibility checks set out above), the PRPs should be submitted for review via the supplier portal in the usual way. As part of the application, Suppliers should select “**Rural**” from the drop-down box labelled “**Confirm Scheme**”.

Requesting Rural Gigabit Vouchers

Following registration of Project PRPs as described above, the subsequent process for requesting Rural Gigabit Vouchers is unchanged. However, suppliers should select “**Rural**” from the drop-down box labelled “**Scheme**” when requesting vouchers.