



**Local Full Fibre Networks Programme
Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme
Supplier Bulletin #30
2.4.20**

Introduction

This bulletin provides an update about the status of the scheme, its funding and sets out some further information about the impact of the COVID-19 (including temporary changes to the Scheme terms and conditions). Please read it carefully and make sure you alert relevant colleagues to its content as appropriate.

Scheme Funding

In previous Bulletins we said we would provide regular updates about the remaining value of the LFFN fund. At 30 March 2020 around £3.6m remains available for new vouchers supported by this fund. The Scheme has delivered over 21,600 connections to date.

We have committed around £14.3m of the rural fund which is part of the £200m Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme.

Suppliers are again encouraged to focus their attention on developing projects which qualify for the ongoing Rural Gigabit Voucher part of the scheme.

COVID-19 scheme amendments

The BDUK vouchers team continues to operate on a business as usual basis with all our personnel working remotely.

In the current operating environment, to further support our suppliers, Bulletin 29 announced that while the current situation is affecting the way that business is carried out, we would not cancel vouchers that had been issued but not connected after 12 months. Below we summarise a number of temporary amendments to timescales in the Scheme terms and conditions as a consequence of the challenges in the current operating environment:

- In Bulletin 29 we temporarily suspended clause 10.2 of the Scheme terms and conditions under which all connections must be **delivered** and voucher claims submitted for payment no later than 12 months from the issue date of the relevant voucher(s). Reminders that this deadline is approaching will continue to be sent. Suppliers should make every reasonable effort to deliver within this timeframe; however, we will not cancel vouchers which have not been delivered after 12 months until further notice.



In addition, with immediate effect we increase:

- the number of days that a customer has to **validate** a new voucher request from 28 days to 60 days; after this period unvalidated voucher requests will be cancelled (amending clause 9.3 of the Scheme terms and conditions temporarily);
- the number of days that a customer has to validate that a new **connection** has been delivered from 28 days to 60 days after this period unvalidated claims may be cancelled at our discretion (amending clause 9.5 of the Scheme terms and conditions temporarily);
- the number of working days suppliers have to respond to **audit** requests to provide evidence that costs against which voucher funding has been claimed have been legitimately incurred and relate to eligible costs only from 5 to 10 working days. (amending clause 12.2 of the Scheme terms and conditions temporarily); and
- the period of time provided for suppliers to respond to **disputed** voucher requests raised by DCMS from 5 to 10 days (this is an operational change and does not require a change to the Scheme terms and conditions).

For the avoidance of doubt, (i) these changes apply to all existing and new vouchers with immediate effect and will remain in effect until further notice; and (ii) all other provisions in the Scheme terms and conditions not referenced above continue to apply. We will continue to monitor the situation and inform all suppliers of any further changes.

Portal Update 27 March

Thank you for your patience last week while we updated the scheme website. We have moved to a new hosting platform which will allow us to embark on a series of improvements to the way the website operates over the coming months.

If you have any questions about the Scheme please contact us using the Support function when signed into the website.

Stay safe. Keep well.