



**Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme
Supplier Bulletin #61
23rd September 2021**

The UK Gigabit Voucher terms and conditions currently state that when an area goes into Public Review (PR), premises within the scope of PR become ineligible for vouchers. However, in June 2021 we confirmed that suppliers may continue to submit projects and request vouchers throughout the Public Review until six weeks before procurement formally starts. As Project Gigabit has developed we have sought to ensure that our approach balances the creation of stable intervention areas against safeguarding community projects in the advanced stages of development which have a high likelihood of delivering earlier coverage than the procurement approach.

Therefore, in keeping with this approach and our commitment to maintaining the momentum in the delivery of gigabit connectivity in the hardest to reach areas, **BDUK will now be identifying voucher priority areas within regional supplier procurement areas as an exceptional process to enable the benefit of the early coverage that can be provided where there are firm and clear voucher plans.** Suppliers will continue to be able to submit proposals and request vouchers for premises within these areas during the regional supplier procurement process.

Intervention areas for procurements are shaped through the Open Market Review and Public Review processes and as part of this BDUK will consider information provided by suppliers on voucher projects. Where there is evidence that a voucher project has a good likelihood of delivering earlier coverage than a procurement (vouchers requested within the last 6 months, issued within the last 12 months, or claimed within the last 6 months) and demo demonstrate good value for money, the UPRNs for that project will be designated as a voucher priority area. Further, by exception only, BDUK may also choose to include specific UPRNs in voucher priority areas where it determines there are: credible plans for projects to be delivered within two years, and the projects are underpinned by likely value for money outcomes that are equivalent or better than those anticipated from a procurement, and the project(s) have appropriate scale and contiguity of boundaries and and complements the procurement approach.

The relevant UPRNs will be placed in the 'deferred scope' for the regional supplier procurement and designated as a voucher priority area and will therefore be eligible for vouchers during the procurement (subject to them continuing to meet the vouchers eligibility criteria as set out in the terms and conditions). Premises in the 'deferred scope' category within the regional supplier contract would only be brought into the build plans for the contract following a further review of whether they will gain gigabit coverage through another route, to avoid potential overbuild.



Local supplier procurements do not have a 'deferred scope' category, and contracts procured through this route will also have a shorter build period than regional supplier contracts. Only areas with very well advanced voucher projects will therefore be excluded from the scope of local supplier procurements.

Where BDUK identifies a voucher priority area(s) for a regional supplier contract this will, going forward, be included in the information that is provided to suppliers interested in bidding for the contract at the Pre-Procurement Market Engagement (PPME) stage and will be confirmed when the procurement is launched. A full list of the voucher priority area UPRNs will also be made available on the vouchers portal when the procurement is launched.

To enable the intervention area to be finalised ahead of a procurement there will be a temporary pause to voucher eligibility for all UPRNs identified in an intervention area at PPME and this will also be made available on the vouchers portal. When the procurement is launched, UPRNs for premises outside the scope of the procurement altogether, and those in voucher priority areas within regional supplier procurements, will be unpaused and be eligible for vouchers throughout the procurement (subject to them continuing to meet the vouchers eligibility criteria as set out in the terms and conditions). We will look to minimise the pause wherever possible but, on average, expect the pause to be around 6-8 weeks. When the contract is awarded any UPRNs that were paused but which are not included within the contract may become eligible for vouchers again following contract award (subject to them continuing to meet the vouchers eligibility criteria as set out in the terms and conditions).

The temporary pauses to voucher eligibility will be determined by the respective Project Gigabit phase, as follows (note, dates are subject to change, and further local supplier procurements may also be brought forward in addition to the Lot areas listed here):

Phase 1 a (exc. Cornwall (Lot 32)) - vouchers paused in intervention area(s) 24 September 2021.

- Cumbria (Lot 28);
- Cambridgeshire and adjacent areas (Lot 5);
- Durham, Tyneside and Teesside areas (Lot 4);
- Northumberland (Lot 34);
- Dorset (local supplier procurement Type As identified at PPME).

Phase 1b (inc. Cornwall (Lot 32)) - vouchers paused in intervention area(s) on 14 January 2022

- Shropshire (Lot 25);
- Norfolk (Lot 7);
- Suffolk (Lot 2);
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight (Lot 27);
- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (Lot 32).



Phase 2

Vouchers paused in intervention area(s) on 8 April 2022

- Worcestershire (Lot 24);
- Oxfordshire and West Berkshire (Lot 13);
- Kent (Lot 29);
- Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and East of Berkshire (Lot 26);
- Staffordshire (Lot 19);
- West Sussex (Lot 1);
- East Sussex (Lot 16);

Vouchers paused in intervention area(s) on 15 July 2022

- Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes (Lot 12);
- Derbyshire (Lot 3);
- Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire and Swindon (Lot 30);
- Lancashire (Lot 9);
- Surrey (Lot 22);

Vouchers paused in intervention area(s) on 15 October 2022

- Leicestershire and Warwickshire (Lot 11);
- Nottinghamshire and West of Lincolnshire (Lot 10);
- West Yorkshire and parts of North Yorkshire (Lot 8);
- South Yorkshire (Lot 20)

There are no current proposals to pause vouchers in Phase 3 areas although we may provide updates in due course. Phase 3 areas are: Birmingham and the Black Country (Lot 35); Cheshire (Lot 17); Devon & Somerset (Lot 6); Herefordshire & Gloucestershire (Lots 15, 18); Dorset (Lot 14) (note Local Supplier contracts are being progressed here, see above); Essex (Lot 21); Lincolnshire (including NE Lincolnshire and N Lincolnshire) and East Riding (Lot 23); Greater London (Lot 37); Merseyside and Greater Manchester (Lot 36); Newcastle and North Tyneside (Lot 38); Northern North Yorkshire (Lot 31); Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (Lots TBC).

As always, suppliers are encouraged to submit projects and requests well ahead of the dates listed above to ensure there is adequate time for BDUK to review potential projects and engage with suppliers on their submissions.

Voucher priority areas are being introduced as we know suppliers are able to deliver faster in some areas through voucher projects. Nevertheless, not all planned voucher projects get off the ground and result in the intended coverage and we need the procurement process to be ready to pick up those areas rather than leave anyone behind. For this reason we're structuring the procurements so that we don't slow suppliers down while protecting residents and businesses.

Voucher priority areas will always be in areas marked as 'Intervention Area, Deferred Scope' on the PPME maps for regional supplier contracts and will be able to be identified by a voucher priority postcode list available on the voucher site, which we will publish per



procurement. We will share these voucher priority areas as soon as we can for the 1A intervention areas and will update suppliers once the lists are available.

Any projects submitted which target voucher priority areas or premises in deferred scope will be subject to additional evaluation to ensure that they offer a faster and more cost effective solution than if the area was delivered through a procurement. This will be completed as part of the standard assurance process.

If you have any questions about the procurement process or the interaction between vouchers and procurements, please contact BDUKSuppliers@dcms.gov.uk.

As a reminder, the Supplier Terms and Conditions can be found at the following link - <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/for-suppliers/tcs/>

For a broader overview of BDUK's work, please also see this webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-digital-uk>

The Digital Connectivity Portal here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-connectivity-portal>

Other useful information and updates can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/resources-for-communications-network-providers>

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