



Finnerne CC Broadband Meeting 25th October 2023 – R100 Q&A

We had invited **Richard Lochhead**, Scottish Government Minister responsible for Policy in this area, and **Duncan Nisbet** from the SG Broadband Delivery Team, to attend, but they were both unavailable.

However we had asked Duncan Nisbet a number of questions about the R100 rollout prior to the meeting, and this is a summary of the questions and his answers.

What is the current Build Timeline for R100 in our area?

In terms of the R100 contracts, I anticipate build starting next year with the majority of connections completed by the end of the calendar year.

Can you explain the previous programme slippage?

The main shift in timing was due to a re-profile of the overall North lot build following an extension to the scope in 2022, rather than any slippage. The impact meant that while some build was accelerated, some areas were re-profiled later in the plan

What is the R100 Development Process and phasing?

Each contract is divided into a number of discrete phases. Each phase then moves through a number of contractual milestones. These are detailed survey, exceptions, build and commission. The survey stage is almost complete and Openreach are currently working through potential exceptions with our contracts team.

What will be delivered?

- Will an R100 Fibre connection bring Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)
 - *Openreach will build the fibre network close to each property. Once an order is made via an ISP, the final connection is supplied, including new equipment inside each home – an optical network termination point or ONT.*

Will there be changes to the current Plan?

There are two main scenarios where a planned connection might not take place, as follows:

1. Post-Survey

At this stage, there may be some planned properties that we look to descope due to factors such as the property being derelict or where a landowner refuses to provide a wayleave. It is also an opportunity to identify properties not in the contract that could be connected as a consequence of the planned build – we call this overspill

2. State Aid Compliance

we must remain compliant with European State Aid legislation. Basically this means that If another supplier can now serve properties with superfast services, ie > 30 mbps) there is no longer a requirement to spend public funds on those properties and to do so, could be a breach of legislation.



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This issue of potential descope is something that both the FCC and FDT have been trying to understand for some time. Could you explain how the implementation of different technologies could lead to a property being removed from R100 planned build?

- *Fixed Mobile Broadband (eg Vodafone or EE mobile) will not impact the contractual build*
- *Satellite Broadband (eg Starlink) it is not accepted as a commercial alternative at this time due to the high setup and monthly costs.*
- *A fixed Fixed Wireless Connection (or FWA) could lead to a descope.*
- *A fixed Fibre Connection from an alternative supplier could lead to a descope.*

However of more concern is that we have been told that it is possible that if a large number of households in an area take advantage of an alternative supplier, then Openreach may not build out to that area. Can you clarify?

1. *If a couple of properties in a cluster procure an alternative, it might not impact the infrastructure we have to build in order to serve the remainder of the cluster, so we likely would not descope.*
2. *We need to look at each area on a case by case basis. However, as we near sign off on the build plan for the area, the likelihood of us descopeing properties due to new/proposed commercial activity significantly lessens.*
3. *A supplier could for example build a network using any technology on a commercial basis, but if they don't inform us and provide technical details for their network, we cannot assess the solution to even consider any potential descope from our contracts.*

Some further questions:

- What happens if Local Provider goes out of business
 - *This is a risk in any service and applies not only to small providers. For example a recent supplier who went into administration has been brought out of administration by another supplier who will take over the network assets and customers, thereby maintaining service. However, in the event of a supplier failing and no alternative coming forward, the properties would become eligible for the R100 Voucher Scheme.*
- If a new house is built next to a house on the R100 rollout plan, will it get a fibre connection?
 - *New builds cannot be added to our contract. However, where the new build can take advantage of the infrastructure deployed as part of the contract, then a service can be delivered.*
- If a new house is built out in the country, away from the R100 plan, will it be eligible for the £5000 Voucher Scheme?
 - *Yes, once it has a local authority provided unique property reference number (UPRN).*
- If a property is currently eligible for the £5000 SBVS, but has not taken up the offer, and the property is sold, then will the new owner be eligible for the Voucher.
 - *Yes.*