Connecting Cumbria – Phase 2

Summary of Consultation responses

Phase 2 of Connecting Cumbria is aiming to extend the availability of Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband across the county with the aim to increase coverage as far as possible across Cumbria.

As per BDUK and state aid requirements, the procurement process for Phase 2 requires setting an official intervention area where no superfast broadband services are currently or planned to be supplied within three years (**Intervention Area).** As part of this process the Council was required to actively reach out to national and local broadband infrastructure providers as to their current coverage and their plans for coverage in the next three years.

Between 28th November – 9th January 2014 a public consultation sought opinions on the potential Intervention Areas for superfast and basic broadband in Phase 2. The consultation enabled the public and service providers to comment on the targeted areas and register opinions.

Maps showing the proposed intervention area can be found at (www.connectingcumbria.org.uk/latest-news). Further information on the consultation can be found at www.connectingcumbria.org.uk.

Intervention area – area types

The draft intervention area map of Cumbria was broken into the following types of areas:

- Black – Two or more Next Generation Access providers are in place or have planned coverage.
- Grey – One Next Generation Access provider is in place or has planned coverage.
- White – No Next Generation Access coverage exists or is planned – public funding can be therefore applied.
- Yellow - **Conditional White** potential Next Generation Access coverage or planned coverage by a supplier but assurance is required.

Consultation results

A summary of the consultation responses can be found below.

Summary of Responses	Number of respondents (Persons and Business not listed)
NEEDS / INCLUSION	
Stated the SFBB/BB is essential for growth in rural areas and the operation rural businesses, e.g. **farming** (online returns to DEFRA, HMRC), **tourism** (visitors expect good Internet access, booking lost if not got it), and knowledge business / home workers / business based at home (need fast access).	Ainstable PC, Claife PC, Caldbeck PC, Duddon PC, ECCBF, Eden DC, Skelton group, Hartsop Society, Hethersgill PC, Kaber PC, Kingwater PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Mungrisdale PC, NFBG, Patterdale BG, Orton PC, Sebergham PC, Shap PC, Tover PC, Wasdale PC,

	Kirkandrews on Esk PC
Stated that SFBB/BB is required to access many central and local government services. In some case Internet access / website portal is the only practical method to access some government services.	Ainstable PC, Claife PC, ECCBF, Eden DC, Skelton group, Hartsop Society, Kaber PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Sebergham PC, Kirkandrews on Esk PC
Stated that without access to SFBB, and therefore without practical access to government, educational, medical services and all kinds of common place commercial services, e.g. banking, online shopping, BBC iPlayer, Skype, that their community is **socially excluded** or the access to SFBB is essential much like the recognised utility services are essential.	Ainstable PC, Claife PC, ECCBF, Bootle PC, Eden DC, Skelton group, Hartsop Society, Kaber PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Mungrisdale PC, NFBG, Sebergham PC, Kirkandrews on Esk PC
Stated that more rural services uses have more to gain from access the SFBB services than less rural service users.	Ainstable PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Patterdale BG, Rory Stewart
Noted that less than 100% rollout of SFBB is splitting communities, creating a digital divide or creating haves and have-nots.	NFBG, Sebergham PC
Noted detrimental effect of broadband service levels on house price(s) / selling a property	Skelton group
HOW TO MEET NEEDS / IMPROVE INCLUSION	
Want Superfast Broadband (SFBB) >24Mb/s in all of their particular area.	Above Derwent PC, Ainstable PC, Bolton PC, Bootle PC, Eden DC, Hethersgill PC, Kingwater PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Longsleddale PC, NFBG, Patterdale BG, Sebergham PC, Shap PC, Temple Sowerby PC, Tover PC
Want widest possible coverage for SFBB and/or want market failure to be eliminated in 100% of Cumbria	Ainstable PC, ECCBF, Martindale PC, Sebergham PC
Want the Universal Service Commitment (USC) >2Mb/s to be delivered, i.e. where SFBB is not delivered.	Above Derwent PC, Boltons PC, Kingwater PC, Longsleddale PC, Sebergham PC, Walton BC
Want minimum speed in Cumbria to be at least 4Mb/s.	Boltons PC, NFBG, Sebergham PC
Want their postcode area(s) to be prioritised.	ECCBF, Hartsop Society

Summary of Responses	Respondents
	(Persons and Business not listed)
COVERAGE / SPEED / RECENT EXPERIENCE	
Stated that less / far less than 93% would have access to SFBB in their area.	Ainstable PC, (Eden Distrct generally), Boltons PC, ECCBF, Eden DC, Kirkoswald PC, NFBG, Patterdale BG
Stated that basic broadband (BB) / Universal Service Commitment (USC) is not going to be good enough / not fast enough.	Claife PC, ECCBF, Skelton group, Kaber PC, Lazonby PC, High Furness LAP
Stated that existing broadband speeds have reduced / services become poorer in 2014.	Skelton group, Hartsop Society
Stated the sub BB / current service is unreliable.	Caldbeck PC
INFORMATION WANTED	
Want clarity/publication regarding the phasing / timing of current and future delivery of broadband services, e.g. when SFBB will be delivered in a postcode area, how SFBB will be in postcode area, to be told as soon as possible if SFBB will not be delivered in a postcode area.	Above Derwent PC, ECCBF, Kaber PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, High Furness LAP, Sebergham PC, Shap PC, Walton BC, Kirkandrews on Esk PC, Workington TC
Want clarity on location of publically funded / other ducting (and available capacity in that ducting) to be made available to providers with a bona fide interests.	
TECHNOLOGY AND DELIVERY WANTED	
Want other technical solutions to be considered / introduced, e.g. fixed wireless, 4G mobile and satellite, instead of FTTC.	Ainstable PC, ECCBF, Eden DC, Kaber PC, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, Longsleddale PC, Rory Stewart, Shap PC
Want more support for community broadband projects	Ainstable PC, ECCBF, Hartsop Society, Kirkoswald PC, Lazonby PC, High Furness LAP, Kirkandrews on Esk PC
Summary of Responses	Respondents
	(Persons and Business not listed)
HOW AND WHERE TO APPLY STATE AID	
Want more rural postcode areas to be priorities over less rural postcode areas	Ainstable PC, Caldbeck PC, ECCBF, Kirkoswald PC, Longsleddale PC, NFBG, Patterdale BG, Rory Stewart, Sebergham PC
Want areas with no / worst current service to be prioritised.	NFBG, Patterdale BG, Rory Stewart, Sebergham PC
Want areas with less than 93% SFBB coverage to be prioritised.	
Want areas designated as BDUK pilot projects to be prioritised.	NFBG
Want all districts to achieve same % SFBB coverage / to be	Patterdale BG

treated equivalently	
Want funding for rural broadband to be substantially increased	
Want Phase 2 procurement to be open to all providers	Workington TC

Finalising the intervention area

Following the consultation, to finalise the Intervention Area the Connecting Cumbria team need to complete assurance of the credibility Conditional White (Yellow) areas by scoring these against criteria outlined by BDUK.

It is a legal requirement for the Council to give reasonable consideration to the coverage claims of alternative network providers however the strict BDUK conditions that these alternative Network Providers must meet to have their areas exempted from publically funded competition should provide assurance to residents and their representatives that they will not be disadvantaged by being served by these local providers.

The four main criteria for assessment are:

1. **Area of Coverage** – determination that delivery services to all premises in postcode areas claimed by Network Providers is possible through their existing services and future plans.

2. **Technical Capability** – determination that the technical solution used by a network provider qualifies as Next Generation Access broadband. This is based on:

   - The list of technologies approved by BDUK
   - Sufficient capacity in the technology to cover the postcodes claimed,
   - Delivery of services is not suffering from interference,
   - Service delivery of at least 15Mb/s during busy periods (evenings),
   - Service is technically capable of delivering at least 30Mb/s,
   - Services can be upgraded (utilising the same technology) to support more users, and is future proofed in the longer term.

Deliverability – determination that the network provider is commercially sustainable, e.g. they have a business model that enables upgrades to be funded from associated income.

Pricing – determination that the network provider's pricing is beneath the BDUK hurdle in accordance with the follow criteria: the installation cost is less than £200 and the ongoing cost is less than £50 per month – the total cost of ownership over two years must equate to less than £1,400.

The assessment considers each of these main criteria independently of the others rather than considering a cumulative score, therefore if a provider fails on one test they are considered to have failed overall. When the process is concluded network provider's coverage areas are either considered:

   - CREDIBLE - their coverage areas must be marked 'Grey'/ 'Black' - not eligible for public funding

   or

   - CREDIBLE, BUT DELIVERY PLANS WILL BE MONITORED – their coverage areas are marked 'Conditional white (yellow)' – not eligible for public funding at this time.

   or

- NOT CREDIBLE - their coverage areas are marked 'White' – therefore eligible for public funding

Next steps

The public consultation process is now closed.

All alternative providers are currently being assessed, before the final intervention area can be finalized and published.

The Council has issued an invitation to tender for phase 2 of Connecting Cumbria based upon the draft intervention area but expect to update this once the final intervention area is agreed with BDUK in line with state aid rules.

For further information on the Connecting Cumbria programme visit our website at www.connectingcumbria.org.uk, follow us on twitter @Connect_Cumbria or email connectingcumbria@cumbria.gov.uk.

Notes on the consultation responses

Note ECCBF states: The East Cumbria Community Broadband Forum (ECCBF) was established in 2011 to provide a means of mutual support and information sharing for broadband champions and others pursuing better broadband services on behalf of Parishes in East Cumbria. The geographical remit of the Forum is broadly Eden District and parts of South Lakeland District and, within the organisation, 54 parishes are represented by 22 member groups.

Note: a very strong response from the Harsop Society and from individuals in the Hartsop area.

Note Northern Fells Broadband Group: NFBG was set up about four years ago with the object of bringing high speed broadband to the seven parishes of Northern Fells comprising Boltons, Caldbeck, Ireby, Sebergham with Welton and Westward with Rosley in Allerdale Borough, and Castle Sowerby and Mungrisdale in Eden District.

Note: a very strong response from individuals in the Winton Area.