

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

8 March 2021

Dear Convener,

Reaching 100% (R100) Programme

Thank you for your letter dated 5 February 2021 requesting an update on delivery and completion timetables for the South, Central and North Lots of the R100 programme.

Across the South and Central lots build continues to progress with first connections now available in Biggar in the South lot and the Auchterarder area in the Central lot. These connections have been delivered well in advance of their contractual delivery dates of 30 June and 31 March 2021 respectively. I set out some detail below:

- The first phase for the South lot (all FTTP) is expected in Biggar and Dolphinton (South Lanarkshire), Broughton, Skirling (both Scottish Borders), Dumfries (Dumfries and Galloway), Dailly, Girvan, Kirkoswald, Old Dailly and Turnberry (South Ayrshire).
- In the Central lot, build is initially focused on connecting premises including in and around Lenziemill (North Lanarkshire), Markinch, Glenrothes, Montrave, Kennoway, Leven, Cupar, St Andrews, Wormit, Newport-on-Tay (all Fife) and Crieff.

Upon completion of the first phase of build (we expect that around 1,800 premises in the South lot and 525 premises in the Central lot will be connected to R100-funded infrastructure. We remain on track to complete the vast majority of contract build across both the South and Central lot contracts by the end of 2023.

As outlined in my letter to you dated 2 February 2021, the R100 North lot contract was signed with BT on 11 December 2020. As was the case with the South and Central contracts, the Scottish Government are providing BT with an updated intervention area (the list of addresses eligible for public sector subsidy) which we have recently consulted upon.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



Accredited
Until 2020



BT will update their implementation plan based on the new intervention area, which takes into account changes to commercial deployment plans that have occurred in the period since their bid was prepared. This remodelling is already underway and should conclude by April 2021, after which point the updated implementation plan can be formally agreed with BT as part of the North lot contract. This will then allow for the online checker to be populated with data for each address covered by the North lot contract.

This change will be subject to rigorous review through our own governance structures, and those of Building Digital UK (BDUK), to ensure that it is acceptable, with Ministers sighted throughout. In the meantime, I am pleased to report that Openreach – BT’s delivery partner on the contract – has already started survey work in areas not affected by changes to the intervention area and this will continue at pace ahead of the formal contract change.

As with the other contracts, deployment in the North lot is structured in phases. Our online address checker will be updated to reflect these roll-out plans as they are confirmed, with a full picture across the North lot contract area available by Summer 2021. I expect further granularity of data on the timing of works in the South and Central will also be added in the coming months, to provide more certainty to communities across those areas on when build will occur, assuming wayleaves can be agreed with land managers.

I can also report that the R100 Programme team is working closely with Openreach to ensure that, wherever possible, deployment is accelerated – as is currently happening in South and Central contract areas. This includes joint working to identify, and where possible overcome, any barriers to deployment. This is the key reason that Openreach has already begun survey work for the North lot, i.e. to ensure build can begin as quickly as possible.

I trust this has proved useful.

Kind regards



PAUL WHEELHOUSE