



## **LJC Rural Broadband Update – June 2012**

### **Introduction**

Broadband is a real opportunity for securing Britain's future economic wellbeing. Specifically in rural areas where there are fewer opportunities to grow the economy. It is vital in keeping British business competitive, reducing costs for service delivery, as well as tackling social exclusion.

The issue facing rural communities is that currently the free market is not providing standard or Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband to all parts of the UK. The "final third" refers to areas that are peripheral where it is either not profitable or not profitable enough for private companies to invest in the infrastructure in broadband or NGA Broadband. The Connecting Shropshire project seeks to bridge the gap in this investment model so that the private sector can then establish itself across the whole of Shropshire.

The project aims to

- Enable 100% of Shropshire's population to access standard broadband at a minimum of 2mbps by the end of 2015
- Provide as much superfast broadband delivered via fibre in Shropshire for the money available by the end of 2015
- Support Shropshire businesses and residents in using and embracing broadband as part of everyday life
- Create an open infrastructure to encourage competition in the market
- Deliver a structured demand stimulation programme which will demonstrate the economic and social benefits that faster broadband brings.

### **Work completed so far**

The following has already been achieved

- Secured £16.4 million public sector funding (BDUK and Shropshire Council)
- The Shropshire local broadband plan has been signed off by BDUK
- Analysed the results of the survey completed by Shropshire businesses and residents last year so that we are procuring the right solution
- Issued a public consultation for state aid to understand the private sectors planned broadband developments in Shropshire for the next 3 years so we can determine the project area – this consultation remains open



- Completed the tender documentation and data room ready for issue
- Launched the first phase of a demand stimulation programme – demand registration. This has to date achieved approximately 6,500 registrations that will be used to demonstrate a demand to the private sector during the procurement

### **Demand Registration**

Demand registration is an important part of the project. The more support we are able to demonstrate to the private sector the increased likelihood that the public sector will invest more money into the project. The more money we are able to secure the better the final solution for Shropshire residents and businesses. Registering your interest is not signing people up to anything; you are just demonstrating that there is a demand.

To encourage more people to register we have shortened the survey to more of a petition style, we have only been able to do this because of the 6,000 detailed surveys we already have. Those people that have already registered do not need to complete the shorter survey.

We would encourage people to continue to register their interest – they are not signing up to anything. The more registrations that we are able to secure the more private sector funding we will be able to attract to the project and the better the final solution.

If you require further information please contact Alison Brock on 01743 252205 or [alison.brock@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:alison.brock@shropshire.gov.uk)

### **Notes**

BDUK - Broadband Delivery UK is a delivery vehicle for the Government's policies on broadband and managing the waves of funding. BDUK's goals include facilitating the delivery of universal broadband and stimulating private sector investment to deliver the best super-fast broadband network in Europe by 2015.