Response from Community Fibre

Question 1: What methods do you consider most useful and practical in the context of stimulating awareness and demand for a broadband connection scheme?
Local marketing – in particular as a local city based initiative

Question 2: If you are an SME, ISP or network operator: (a) would you be keen to participate in the voucher scheme on the basis that we have set out in this consultation? Yes **(b) In addition to the elements described in this consultation document, what further steps, if any, would BDUK need to take to ensure your participation in the scheme (e.g. broadening the categories of eligible end-users)?** The scheme seems well defined

Question 3: Does BDUK need to place any conditions or criteria on the vouchers to ensure effective take-up by end-users? No

Question 4: Which costs do you consider should eligible for funding by the connection voucher? Connection costs

Question 5: Do you think the current value range proposed for the connection vouchers (£250 to £3,000) is appropriate? Yes

Question 6: Should a contribution to the connectivity costs be required of end-users or should the scheme support the total costs of connectivity? As it is hard to define exactly connectivity costs I think this is an adequate principle, however care will have to be taken to assess the BB offering as a whole. It may be appropriate to consider an 18 month 'all up' cost to the SME of providing a service and subsidise a percentage of this?? This would stop 'cost loading'
If you consider a contribution to be appropriate plase explain why and confirm which end-user should be required to contribute (e.g. SMEs, residents etc.), and what the minimum contribution should be. See above

Question 7: Do you agree that a 'portal' (web based interface) providing is the best mechanism to enable end-user's to meet potential suppliers? If so, what information do you consider should be provided on the 'portal'? Different cities seem to have different views on this. I believe it depends on the city.

Question 8: Other than the use of a portal, what steps could be taken by BDUK to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the scheme for suppliers and end-users? Work closely with the chosen city.

Question 9: The measures that BDUK is proposing are designed to stimulate the take-up of high-grade connectivity demanded by SMEs. These measures and the voucher scheme in particular have been formulated to work with the current regulatory framework and State aid rules. Please confirm:

(a) **Whether and how you consider these measures might result in a distortion to competition and what, if any, adjustments to the scheme might serve to correct for such distortions; and**

(b) **Whether the operation of the proposed scheme is likely to give rise to any regulatory concerns.** No

Question 10: What methods do you consider might be most useful and practical to monitor the Voucher Scheme and evaluate its outcomes? Independent measure applied cross cities – each city is a data set

Question 11: Are there any other aspects that directly relate to BDUK's proposed demand-side measures that you would like to raise? As a small point, I am not sure that 'super fast' broadband is always the issue. Often for the smaller SME I believe 'super reliable' broadband can be just as important. Take the example of a small retailer that relies on the connectivity of its EPOS machines for credit card transactions over a WiFi link. Actually what really causes an issue is if the system is unavailable – not the speed