

I apologise for not being clear on your final point. I thought I had covered it with my response: "The Government made it clear ahead of our Invitation to Tender launch in October 2012 to select a supplier that they would not accept any local plan which dictated to potential suppliers geographical phasing....." Essentially, we are not dictating the geographical phasing and we are instead pressing our supplier BT to produce the speediest, most cost effective and technologically efficient roll-out across Kent and Medway. To be brutal this means you cannot influence the phasing of the roll-out as if we allowed one area to do so, we would face similar requests from everywhere else. We simply don't have the time to achieve this, as we only have two years to complete the roll-out in its entirety across both Kent and Medway and there is a lot to do in very little time.

What you can help us with, however, is specific intelligence over the issues local people face and what likely uses they will make of better broadband. I am very keen to press BT to achieve more and better throughout the life of our contract with them and to continue to impress upon them the needs of local people. We will also be monitoring the take-up of broadband once the scheme is in progress, including the uses people have for it and the problems they may face once it is in place. I regard this project as very much the first step on a much longer journey and wish to continue dialogue with local people who have a keen interest in broadband.

We intend to publish the phasing of our roll-out plans within the next few weeks and this will include a postcode checker that will enable people to see what speeds they can expect to receive under our project and when they will see work begin. I am confident this will help to assuage many people's fears over the general information for the County. As each phase progresses we will be able to publish more detailed information on their areas as surveys are completed and better information becomes available. We will therefore continue to update our information to ensure that people can use the most up to date data available.

I hope this clarifies the position for you.

Regards

Mark Dance

24 Sept 2013