![SPICe The Information Centre An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh]

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition PE1931: Improve the R100 rollout by prioritising properties who currently have speeds of less than 5 Mbps, lodged by Ian Barker

Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

Petition PE1931 calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to prevent digital exclusion for rural properties and their households by giving priority in the R100 programme to properties with internet speeds of less than 5 megabits per second (Mbps).

The petitioner highlights that his property, and his neighbours, have not yet been upgraded to a fibre broadband connection, but that properties 800 metres away already have access to fibre speeds of up to 70 Mbps, and are currently being upgraded again to speeds of up to 900 Mbps.

All legislative and regulatory responsibility for telecommunications rests with the UK government and Ofcom respectively. While the Scottish Government do not have legislative responsibility, Reaching 100 (R100) is a high-profile programme of work to improve digital connectivity in Scotland.

The £600 million R100 programme is 96.5% funded by the Scottish Government, alongside the Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme (SBVS) and commercial build, they aim to deliver a minimum of superfast (greater than 30Mbps) broadband to remaining premises (5.2% of premises) currently without superfast access in Scotland.

The R100 project was first established as a follow-on programme to Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) in 2017 and aspired to extend superfast broadband connectivity to 100% of Scottish premises by the end of 2021 (March 2022 as a financial year). However, due to a range of challenges, R100 now has extended target dates for completion. Background on the timeline for R100 and the challenges experienced are set out in a series of SPICe Spotlight blogs:

- Superfast broadband – will Scotland reach 100? (September 2019)
- R100: Moving (slowly) towards superfast broadband (January 2020)
- Connecting R100 – making broadband progress (October 2020)

The R100 procurement programme is being delivered in a series of phased milestones. Payment for each phase is based on the cost of deployments to the premises and will not be made if premises are not connected without reason. Once a milestone has been achieved, action is taken to ensure that the network is performing correctly before payment is made.

A [PQ from August 2021](#) showed households in each local authority it estimates (a) currently and (b) will access broadband through (i) the R100 contracts, (ii) the superfast broadband voucher scheme and (iii) commercial coverage.

Andrew Feeney-Seale
Senior Researcher
[01/04/2022]

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.