

Emailed to: Broadband.USO@ofcom.org.uk

07 September 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ofcom: Approach to high excess costs under the broadband universal service

I write in response to the Ofcom consultation on the Approach to high excess costs under the broadband universal service.

Answer to the specific question:

Q1. Do you agree with our proposal to amend the treatment of excess costs in determining eligibility for a USO connection, where excess costs are above £5,000? Please set out your reasons and supporting evidence for your response?

We support the proposal to amend the treatment of excess costs in determining eligibility for a USO connection where excess costs are above £5,000 as we think this will provide greater clarity. We agree that although some consumers will benefit from receiving lower quotes, there will be premises where provision costs remain high, so we support Ofcom's continued efforts to work with industry and the Government to explore alternative technology and funding solutions for premises facing very high excess costs to receive a decent broadband connection.

With the importance of a broadband connection growing, there may be further clarity needed for those consumers:

- who choose to opt out of paying the excess costs at a point in time, but then change their mind later on; and
- in households where there has been a change of ownership within the timeframe.

We also wonder if further clarity may be needed about whether costs will be recalculated if there is a higher take-up than the expected 70%.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like further information regarding our response. Our response is not confidential.

Director of Regulatory Affairs

