

Adran yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Department for Economy, Science and Transport

Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol • Director General



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Darren Millar AM
Chair
Public Accounts Committee

1 June 2015

Dear Mr Millar

AGW Report – Welsh Government Investment in Next Generation Broadband Infrastructure

Thank you for your letter of 28 May 2015 regarding the Auditor General for Wales's report Welsh Government investment in next generation broadband infrastructure.

We welcome the report, overall it is very positive identifying many aspects where the project is performing well and providing assurance that the Superfast Cymru project is well run.

It recognises that we are clear about what we are trying to achieve and that there is a clear justification for action. Our procurement was effective despite only having one final bidder and we now have appropriate arrangements in place to manage the project.

The report categorises progress as reasonable, although the project is currently ahead of contractual targets, and that the vast majority of the direct benefits in terms of jobs, apprenticeships and work experience have already been achieved.

However, given the sheer scale and complexity of the project and the rurality and topography of Wales it is not without its continuing challenges.

It will take some time to work through and properly address each of the recommendations in detail. In summary, however, communications and marketing is kept under constant review and we will continue to work with BT to ensure the project remains focused on achieving contractual targets.

Take-up is influenced by a wide range of factors most of which are beyond the control of the project so we will need to consider carefully our approach to targets.

We are developing new schemes to address those areas outside of the Superfast Cymru and commercial roll-out areas and will as part of this work consider how the Access Broadband Cymru scheme fits into these plans. We have already achieved major benefits targets but more work is in train to identify and track other less direct benefits.

The success of the project will lead to a range of lessons that both the organisation and the wider public sector can learn from and we will seek to share these lessons as widely as possible.

We look forward to receiving the committee's view on the report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'jprice' with '(SR PRICE)' written below it in a slightly larger, more legible font.

James Price