

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

County Council

8th March 2018

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Martin Weale, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning

SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Kathryn Silk

Can the Cabinet Member explain what contact Cabinet Members or officials of the Council have had with the Welsh Government about the Minister responsible for digital infrastructure's announcement on 30th January that Powys is to be targeted for connection to superfast broadband for homes and businesses not connected under the previous Openreach scheme; how many properties are expected to benefit in Powys under the proposed new contract; what areas of Powys are being prioritised; how those priorities are being established; when delivery is expected to begin and to be completed; and whether every settlement in Powys can now expect connection to superfast broadband?

Response

The Council's Regeneration Team continues to work with Welsh Government's ICT Infrastructure team over the roll out of Superfast Broadband in Phase 2 of its programme. We understand the budget for this programme across Wales which will cover the period 2018-23 is circa £80M with Mid Wales identified as a priority area for investment.

The Superfast Broadband initiative is a Welsh Government programme and Powys County Council's is a consultee in this process.

In July 2017 as part of the Phase 2 consultation Powys County Council highlighted what it felt were priority areas for the next phase of roll out.

The second phase contracts (2018-23) are currently out to tender and it is anticipated that a Welsh Government decision on these will be known around April 2018.

We are given to understand that delivery locations will be agreed through the tender process itself.

Suppliers are required to indicate what and where they are able to deliver in the bids they submit.

Once this process is completed we will then understand how many properties may be connected in Phase 2.

At this time the detailed time table for delivery is not available as it has yet to be agreed with the successful suppliers.

As much of the core fibre network has already been installed it is anticipated that the second phase of delivery will include a higher number of alternative broadband solutions such as community based Wi-Fi systems and other technologies.

A successful Wi-Fi based pilot project was recently completed in the community of Crai, in the Brecon Beacons with support from the Regeneration Team providing stable 30Mb connections for 75 premises <https://www.growinpowys.com/crai-project-uk> .