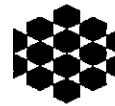


From the Office of the Minister



Department of
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and Investment**

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INV 7-13

Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

6 February 2013

Dear Roy

STATEMENT TO THE ASSEMBLY ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Following my statement to the Assembly on telecommunications I had agreed to respond to your enquiry about improvement to broadband especially along that portion of the A2 that runs through East Antrim.

Funding has been given by the Chancellor to Northern Ireland to improve broadband and mobile services.

The specific funding you referred to for the A2 relates to a UK wide project to improve mobile voice services. This project is being led by the Department of Culture Media and Sport in London. While I am certain Northern Ireland will benefit, again until a contract is awarded I am unable to comment on what the specific gain to consumers will be.

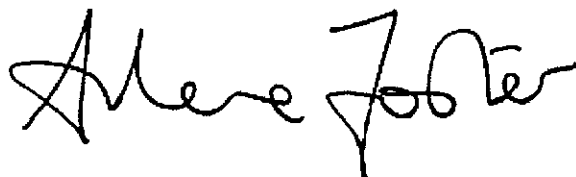
You will have also seen the document published on the Department's website seeking to improve the provision of broadband services and that a number of sections of the A2 which pass through your constituency have been identified as areas where the choice of broadband services is limited. The document can be found at www.detini.gov.uk/deti-telecoms-index/deti-telecoms-whats-new.htm along with an accompanying list of postcodes. The outcome of an associated public consultation is presently being analysed

to help us finalise on where to intervene with public investment. It is my intention to publish the result of this analysis and the precise area of intervention shortly.

I am however, unable to inform you of the precise improvements that may occur as this is dependent on any response received as a result of the linked procurement exercise I intend to run shortly. However, if the procurement is successful, consumers in these areas will see benefits as a result of this project.

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be sent to the Speaker's Office and a copy placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arlene Foster'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Arlene Foster MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment