

From the Office of the Minister



Department of
**Enterprise, Trade
and Investment**

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Our Ref: DETI SUB 094/2014

John McCallister MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 306
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

4 March 2014

Dear John

I refer to the supplementary question raised by you on 17th February in which you asked me to outline how much of the £230m from the UK Government my Department will receive and where it will be spent?

In responding I referred to the funding package for the recently announced Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project (NIBIP) and advised that, from memory, the allocation to that project from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) amounted to £6m.

I need to amend this figure as my Department is actually receiving £4.4m from DCMS under the £530m Rural Broadband Programme announced in October 2010. The aim of this funding is to ensure that virtually all premises across the UK can access services of at least 2Mbps and that at least 90% of premises can access services of 24Mbps or more by 2015.

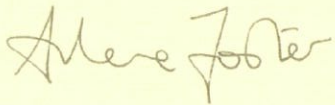
A further £250m of UK Government funding for broadband was announced in June 2013. The aim is to increase the superfast coverage to 95% of premises by 2017. The process for allocating this funding has not yet been agreed or indeed what the Northern Ireland share will be. My officials are in continuous liaison with their DCMS counterparts to remain fully informed and are ready to act as soon as the process has been finalised.

In my answer, I also referred to my Department receiving more money for the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP). I should clarify that the MIP is an initiative to deliver improvements in the coverage of voice and basic mobile data services across the UK. As such, the project is being directly managed and administered by DCMS and while Northern Ireland is expected to benefit, with 19% of the mast sites to be deployed located in the region, no monies will be directly allocated to the Northern Ireland Executive.

I regret inadvertently providing information that was not wholly correct and for any inconvenience that it may have caused.

I will arrange for copies of this letter to be emailed to the Speaker's Office/Business Office (for Hansard), a copy to be provided to other MLAs and a copy will be placed in the Assembly Library.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Arlene Foster".

ARLENE FOSTER MLA

Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment