



# Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel 020 7219 6188 website [www.parliament.uk/cms](http://www.parliament.uk/cms)

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
100 Parliament Street  
London  
SW1A 2BQ

By email

5 March 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

I write concerning the Government's Response to the DCMS Committee's report on 'Broadband and the Road to 5G'.

We have today published the material supplied by your Department on 22 February. However, we do not feel that it adequately responds to the recommendations in our Report and therefore request a fuller response addressing key points that have, as yet, gone unanswered.

Throughout our inquiry, we heard concerns that the Government has been setting coverage targets for full-fibre and 5G without detailed plans on how it expects to deliver them. We therefore called on the Government to outline the reasoning behind its scaling-back of the target for gigabit-capable coverage by 2025 to 85% (paragraph 32); what will happen with the remaining £3.8 billion of pledged investment (paragraph 50); the Department's strategy for delivering to those semi-urban areas unlikely to benefit from commercial rollout (paragraph 89) and its views on time-limited visa solutions to address the industry's labour needs until such time that these can be met by the domestic workforce (paragraph 122).

As the material received from your Department to date fails to answer these queries, we request it provides:

1. Detail on the "extensive engagement with industry over the past year, as well as current industry rates of deployment and how these may increase up to 2025" that informed the revised target;
2. A full assessment of how likely the Department considers the revised target to be met;
3. The target date by which the Department expects the remaining 15% of premises to be served with gigabit-capable broadband;
4. How and when the Department expects to make the remaining £3.8 billion available for delivering gigabit-capable broadband to the hardest-to-reach properties;
5. The Department's strategy for delivering to those semi-urban areas unlikely to benefit from commercial rollout; and
6. The Government's view on time-limited visa solutions for telecoms engineers from the EU.

We would be grateful to receive the Government's Response in full by Thursday 1 April.

Yours sincerely,

**Julian Knight MP**

**Chair, DCMS Committee**